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THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

MAY 29 1981

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The managerial millennium

By Kenneth Minogue

JUDITH A. MERKLE:
Management and Ideology
The Legacy of the International Scientific Management Movement
225pp. University of California Press, 211.
0 520 03737 5

Frederick Winslow Taylor was the leading figure in a group of American engineers who from the 1880s onwards developed the principles of what they called "Scientific Management". In the public mind, this movement was imagined as men in white coats analysing the movements of factory workers with stop-watches and noting down the results on clip-boards. The workers hated the very thought of it, fearing any speeding up of what had often become a comfortable routine of life.

In his *Principles of Scientific Management*, Taylor describes an "experiment" in which a Carmax worker, thereafter Schmidt, cooperates with the system and becomes capable of loading forty-seven half-tons of pig iron a day, improving on the daily average of twelve half-tons per day which was the prevailing average at Bethlehem Steel which Taylor was reorganizing. The real facts of the case were obscure, but this kind of inspirational story helped Taylor to break down resistance of both bosses and workers to his proposal, and early in the new century they became the focus of a national cult of efficiency. This cult soon spread to other countries, most notably to the Soviet Union. The Bolsheviks, who had earlier denounced the whole idea as a form of capitalist exploitation of the workers, took it up with all the enthusiasm of men in desperate circumstances, and it lay behind the early shock brigades to industry, and the later system of Stakhanovism. It was adopted by the French and the Germans but had only a small and limited effect on the British.

Such is the story Judith Merkle has to tell in *Management and Ideology*. Those at all familiar with it tend to regard it as a minor episode in the history of modern management. It is Professor Merkle's contention that, far from being merely a set of techniques aimed at making factories more efficient, Taylorism was a fully fledged technocratic ideology, crusading for a new society. As such, it has had deep, lasting and often unrecognized effects on the way we live now. Taylor's ideas were not limited to worker efficiency. They were the inspiration, for example, of personal self-development as expressed in theories of positive thinking, and they grew a political wing which influenced both the politics and (more significantly) the administration of America and other countries.

To combine history with a critical evaluation is a virtually impossible task, and it is a persistent problem of Professor Merkle's book, that the coherence of a historical account is often thrown to the winds in order to develop a critical point. The early pages are especially disorienting, leaving the reader adrift without signposts as the author takes off on one or another of her ideological excursions. Nevertheless, *Management and Ideology* is an important book, and Professor Merkle manages to sustain her theme — in so far as one can be entirely sure what that theme is. Her last sentence catches precisely the rather terrible irony: "Knowing the history of the International Scientific Management movement, it is difficult to judge how imminent and with what emotions we should expect the next industrial prophet: 'What the society needs is: Run, don't walk, to the nearest desert island'."

There are two particularly fascinating problems which face such an ambitious enterprise. The first is how to establish an identity for Taylorism in the centuries-long history of rationalization in industry. The very definition of labour itself is a prototype Taylorism, and Taylorism, like Henry Ford's assembly line, was an emergent

and vigorous class: the managers, whose rule will initiate a millennium. Taylorism is thus given a central place in generating that tradition of thought, also indebted to Polish and Italian sources, whose most famous exponent is the James Burnham of *The Managerial Revolution*.

The second problem is what to do with the claim that Taylorism was scientific management. Professor Merkle is understandably sceptical about this claim, but her argument is fudged and never quite emerges with clarity. Much of the time she is content with one-line put-downs to the effect that the neutrality, objectivity and supposedly scientific character of Taylorism actually conceals political and ideological objectives. What she means by this is simply that Taylor was not merely supplying better means to other people's ends, but that he had ends of his own to promote. No doubt. But what is important to recognize in the first place is what Taylor himself actually meant by the claim.

Further, Scientific Management simplified the operations of production in such a way that the heritage of skilled craftsmanship on which factories had long depended was often completely destroyed. That the Taylorians created a desert and called it productivity is perhaps the central charge she lays at the door of the movement. Its effects are still being felt, and it has caused, so the argument runs, the alienation from industry which has long been ascribed, wrongly, to the very process of industry itself.

Above all, Taylorism was explicitly propagated by its founder himself as a "mental revolution" which could solve all the problems of society at the turn of the century. Abundance would put an end to class conflict. Seen in these ambitious terms, Taylorism is indeed a fully fledged modern ideology (rather than merely a set of techniques which can serve any purpose). It stands on all fours with communism, nationalism, fascism and the other forms of salvation by social science which have dominated our century. And, like all ideologies, it lies at the service of a new

only some such crusading assault upon the self-protective devices workers had evolved to make their lives comfortable would have had all of these results. The hatred of Taylorism by most work-forces was partly a hatred of an exhausting speeding up of work from which the workers generally expected few benefits. But it was also a hatred of a process by which they lost control over what they were doing to a band of alien experts. The bosses felt just the same way. The Taylorians, like the utilitarian forebears whom they much resemble, were simple-minded rationalists who believed that a man had only to consult his reason to recognize the superiority of the new and efficient technique put before him. Hence the saga of Taylorian expansion became one of those melodramas in which progress is pitted against the forces of conservatism, reaction and superstition. The result was rather like Proust rewritten by Samuel Sniles.

In fact, of course, Taylorism was far from being the pure technical improvement its supporters claimed. The workers certainly had to trade off leisure against the possibility of making more money on piece rates. The skill of the craftsman was replaced by a sequence of exercises fit for idiots. It was not merely that this led to boredom and fractiousness in the factories, but also that the loss of skill was largely irreversible, and American industry (especially in the area of military technicians) suffers from it to this day. And, especially when Taylorian methods were applied in the Soviet Union, the speeding up of work and the fulfilling of production norms were often achieved at fearful cost to the capital equipment.

It is by focusing on these considerations that Professor Merkle reduces the science of the Taylorians to a form of politics. She is not at all sensitive to the way in which the very term "science" has changed in the past century, and, in a notably ambiguous passage, she describes one of Taylor's experiments as being "falsified" when what she actually means is that it has recently been discovered to have been faked. Similarly, her view of politics is the common one that politics happens whenever people quarrel about power or status. This common view looks like a discovery because it allows us to discover "politics" in all sorts of places we

He meant by it two things which are both, up to a point, justified by the usage of "scientific" prevalent in his time. First, he aimed to replace mere knack and know-how with rational principles. Second, his techniques could help in achieving any purpose, and producing any commodity, that might be chosen. So far as Taylor could see, everyone would benefit from his system: the consumer by abundance, the capitalist by greater profits, and the worker by higher wages. And, as the history of the United States above all has shown, Taylor was absolutely right. All these good things have happened. Further, it seems likely that

Skin and Television

Outside, the winding and unwinding dance.
Tonight the clouds drift like the terrible grey floaters.
The souls of unfortunates who have swollen with tears
To grey acres that drift over parched farmlands.
Touch could tell a different story:
Finger the seed with its waving corridors.

Its heaps of autumn leaves; the egg
Beats feathers and cheeks in her hand.
And the outer dew lies over the grass like a cloth.
The linen sheet which all the people breathe.
The one shining cloth hung behind clouded windows.
As for myself, I love the three

Rain-drenched girls in their luminous
It's a knockout nylon uniform, my own skin
Pulses with light because of their exasperating raptures.

The ancient distracted snakes by laying
Sheepskin for them to glide on our elders
Are distracted from their blank tombs

By the phosphorescent stone that blurs out late
Of guiltless death. Admitted
That dandelion has granite dreams

Of the soil it yellows from, and the light
Goes on booting, day and night
Into the grey boulder dreaming of influence.

President like the white moon; but this other
Complex electrical issue of rocks
Gives back a nylon sex-glimpse

Out of its hollow memento that stares for ever
Into the invisible waterfall of other ceaselessly
Raining in white pictures all over us.

Peter Redgrove

don't normally expect, but the illumination thus gained is merely a verbal illusion. No one ever doubted that conflict frequently occurs, but it trivializes politics to identify it with conflict.

This central issue is best illuminated in Professor Merkle's comparison of a managerial bureaucracy with an electric can-opener. The problem is: Is Taylorism merely the tool of efficiency it pretends to be? Professor Merkle says it isn't because it brings values other than mere serviceable efficiency in its train. It is, she says, like an electric can-opener which only makes sense in terms of a modern style of life. She remarks of the metaphorical electric can-opener that "such a tool, purchased at the price of extreme specialization and a reduction of adaptability, makes a statement about the type of civilization in which it exists and, ultimately, about the social values of that civilization". But does it? The can-opener by itself tells us nothing except that the civilization used cans. How often, and in association with what values, cannot be known without other evidence. The word "ultimately", of course, usually signals an argument that won't quite come out right, and that seems to be the case here. Professor Merkle has been misled by the current clichés in epistemology which are forever smoking out the values supposedly concealed behind claims to science, objectivity and neutrality. The simple point is that the idea of a tool is an abstraction, and that an organization of human beings serving as a tool of efficiency is something even more remote from actuality: a metaphorical abstraction. Each of those human beings combining to compose the managerial bureaucracy has his or her own thoughts, inclinations and ends, and hence there is always much more happening than merely the enhancement of efficient production. One may be neutral about many things without being neutral about everything.

Taylorism certainly has, as Professor Merkle argues, many of the characteristics of the American civilization of the late nineteenth century when it was born, and some of these came floating into the factories on the wings of technique. But there are important distinctions to be drawn between the values which happen to accompany techniques; and the values which a technique subserves.

The actual political stance with which Taylorism was entangled was articulated by H. L. Gantt. He denounced current American practices as "the debating society theory of Government" and went on to explain that it meant deciding policy "not by demonstrated facts but by opinions; not according to the laws of physics, but by majority vote". Gantt thought that "Real democracy consists of the organization of human affairs in harmony with natural laws, so that each individual shall have an equal opportunity to function at his highest possible capacity... Until the people consent to such a change they will never attain to real democracy." It is no wonder that such simplicities should have so commended themselves to the Bolsheviks and the Fascists of the early part of the century.

Taylor and his followers are little to the modern taste. They lack subtlety; there's no poetry in them, or even interesting scandal; and for all their ideological clout, their manifestos never made the pulse race faster. They encouraged unmistakably from the crudest strain of American rationalism, in which life consists in a succession of solutions to problems, and the universe organization, matter is their appropriate descendant. Further, it is all too easy to stretch them on the rack of modern social science, especially Taylor himself, who suffered from nightmares, and invented bizarre machines to help him deal with them. Professor Merkle is more interested in explaining them than in understanding them. It is at this point that social science impedes historical understanding, for instead of trying to reconstruct

John Napier: Hands

the situation in which these vigorous and not entirely unimaginative men saw themselves and the problems they imagined they faced, she prefers to deploy an eclectic set of psychological and sociological theories to render them less opaque: the Protestant ethic, charisma, the search for father figures, cravings for status and a battery of religious metaphors are among the devices pressed into service.

Above all, they are seen as essentially middle-class. Professor Merkle expresses Taylor's vision of modern society as "split between two inimical classes, enviously quarrelling over the share of a meager industrial output both are too anxious to increase". The professional middle classes have the redemptive role of bringing peace and abundance. But this statement of Taylor's view comes at the end of the book, and more commonly she takes a new class of parasites on the face of industry, insatiable themselves before bosses and men, and creating as much harm as benefit. Many members of the movement had, like Taylor himself, been compelled to leave college and go to work in factories for lack of money. It is no doubt common

for people to imagine, as Taylor and his followers seem to have done, that those above and those below them on some imagined social scale share deplorable features, but the report of these imaginings cannot become the basis of a sociological explanation of a movement. In the United States, the "middle classes" are a remarkably fluid and unspecific class of people and thus no basis for a theory. This is enough by itself to render entirely null such curious remarks as: "Perhaps because his neuroses were the neuroses of an era, or rather, of a class within that era, Taylor's personal solutions to the problems of order and control were successfully writ large on American society itself." Sociopathology of this kind merely patronizes and diminishes people, while explaining nothing at all.

Management and Ideology is, however, an interesting piece of work on a subject of central importance. And for British readers, it has an additional interest. Taylorism never really got off the ground in Britain because it was not a match for the cunning of labour in finding off more efficient organization. Professor Merkle recounts some familiar horrors of British workmen being imported

with their machinery to the United States, only to be smartly sacked because they could not make it work profitably. She explains British imperviousness to Taylorism by saying that "the antiquated class structure of Britain, with its stress on the cult of the amateur for the upper classes, and practical but humble expertise for the lower classes, proved to be a barrier to Taylorism". Her fundamental explanation however is that "Without technocrats of uncertain social origins, there was no group whose greatest interest lay in the propagation of Scientific Management as a profession". The British industrial situation is thus seen as one in which management confronted labour without an intervening stratum of managerial experts, and this has led on to British management decline. Whatever one's view of the cause may be, there's little doubt about the decline. There is thus an interesting and unresolved tension between Professor Merkle's account of the cost to Britain of resisting efficient management, and her general thesis that Taylorism is a hydra-headed monster, difficult to get rid of, and of doubtful benefit to the modern world.



"The Pigott débacle", as the official historians of *The Times* called it, ruled from the paper's publication in 1887 of a series of articles on "Parnell and Crime" which based their argument on a number of letters, purportedly written by Charles Parnell. These letters proved that the Irish nationalist leader had plotted the Phoenix Park murders in 1882. While a judicial commission was investigating the affair, the purveyor of the letters, Richard Pigott, committed suicide, leaving behind a confession which confirmed the letters as forged. The cartoon, first published in *Punch*, is taken from the book reviewed opposite.

The strident scalpel

By J. F. Watkins

RICHARD SELZER:

Mortal Lessons
216pp. Chatto and Windus. £8.50.
0 7011 2558 6

Richard Selzer is an American surgeon. His book is a collection of twenty-four pieces called "essays", although they could more accurately be called prose poems. In some he celebrates the liver, the stomach, the kidneys, the ureters, the bladder, the intestines, the hair, and, briefly, the spleen; in others he tells anecdotes about some of his surgical experiences. The last piece is a diatribe against pathologists, whom he hates, and whose activities he appears not to understand—a strange inadequacy in a surgeon. From the evidence presented in this book I would diagnose his condition as Stupor et Horror Corporis, complicated by Chronic Euphoria, and aggravated, I suspect, by a distal too rich in Whitman, Thomas Carlyle, and the kind of advertiser's prose to be found in glossy magazines.

There is no reason why a man's Muse should not be awakened just as effectively by the viscera as by skylarks, nightingales, Cicero, urns, Whitman, weddings, and other commonplaces of human experience. All that matters is what the Muse does when she is aroused. Dr Selzer's Muse, for much of the time, bellows straightforward bits of anatomical and clinical information bedecked with every kind of literary excess: the kidneys, for example, "wear" with Napoleonic panache, the tricornered hat of the adrenal gland. "This is inaccurate. The kidneys do not share what they have one each; Napoleon did not wear his hat with panache, and it was not three-cornered. Selzer's exuberance of mind has betrayed him. A few more examples of the style may be of interest.

Bones: "Bones. Two hundred and eight of them. A whole glory turned and tooled. Lb. the timbered femur all hung and strapped with bone. . . . bone, bone, is the pit of a man after the pumbeeing flesh has been eaten away."

Skinn: "Gaze upon the skin as I have, through a microscope brightly and tremble at the wisdom of God, for here is a magic tissue to suit all seasons."

Priorities: "And what heartbroken priorities: surveying his embattled skin, would not volunteer for an unanesthetized flaying could it but rid him of his pink sequins, his silver spangles."

Vomiting of Pregnancy: "For what should be, from that secret soil, the sublimate slippage of the mooning until the splashing of the anchor, a three-quarter-year sojourn upon serene seas, becomes an ungainly lurch from basin to pot."

The stomach: "Belly dwells a prisoner, fed or starved as suits his janitor, at whose whim he is bludgeoned by leaden dumplings, or is with harsh heat horsedradish seared."

Baldness: "O Scalp, Scalp, wilt thou not bleed, not scream from this murderous depilation? Behold, thou art scythed and give no sign save a silence from nape to brow."

Dr Selzer is very different from the average surgeon, for whom a liver is a liver, and nothing more. In his perception the liver has "The shape of Diana's helmet" and "weighs in at three to four pounds." Most of his liver poem deals, fairly accurately, with alcoholic cirrhosis, and may be of help to worried business men. He is surely wrong, however, when he says that the liver is turned to "a mass of fatty globules by a double martini." At least, it is to be hoped that he is wrong.

In the course of their careers medical practitioners see more horrors than the layman ever dreams of. Like many of his colleagues, Selzer sees the world as a "hell in which we wage our lives" and his anecdotes describe, in detail, some of the nastier corners of that hell. The details are accurate, but perhaps too lovingly drawn. There is a faint, uncomfortable roilish detectable in his story of the woman who re-opened her abdominal incision in order to explore her own viscera, and in his accounts of amputations, and unsuccessful operations for cancer. One vignette describes a husband feeding his wife through a gastrostomy tube. She is dying of a particularly unpleasant cancer of the neck which has blocked her oesophagus, but the intended effect, of loving care somehow transforming and alleviating a horrible situation, does not come off. We have only a harrowing account of a private anguish which should not be seen by prying eyes. The reader is left with a feeling of guilt, similar to the guilt which some, at least, of the spectators must have when they move away from a messy traffic accident.

The pornography of death is as alluring, and as corrosive, as any other pornography, and Selzer is an enthusiastic practitioner of the art. He is, I believe, a soul in torment. "You may think," he seems to say, "that life, for all its tragedies, is, for most people, not too unpleasant. I will show you how filthy it really is. I cannot believe, however, that all his operations ended in ghastly failure; some, at least, of his patients must have walked out of the hospital in better condition than they were in on admission. Selzer's attitude, to his work, like that of many, perhaps all, surgeons, is tinged with sadism. A man who does not, in his depths, enjoy cutting flesh could never endure the physical and mental strain of being a surgeon. In *The Knife* he sees himself as a priest dressed in mask and gown instead of surplice and cassock. Sexual imagery is not far away. "The flesh splits with tremor kind of orgasm, it is like the penetration of a penis. It is the expression of this kind of suppressed excitement that will make his book a

success among readers conditioned by our best contemporary writers and by their inferior brethren in the media to long for the stimulation of representations of violence and sexual activity. In these respects the book is very much a manifestation of the decaying literary culture of our time.

One anecdote stands out from all the rest, and is a small masterpiece, written, presumably, while Selzer's exhausted Muse was asleep. In "Tillim" he describes, simply, and without hysterical extravagance, a minor operation on a Jewish boy for an ingrowing toenail. The boy's father, a devout, Orthodox survivor of Hitler's massacres, is present at the operation to give strength to his son. If all the pieces in the book had the quality of this one, Selzer would have to be recognized as a writer of the first rank. One out of twenty-four is a higher score than most of us could achieve, so there is hope for him. If only he can come to terms with his Jacobean obsession with mortality and decay. In strictly statistical terms the great majority of people will not have to endure the horrible deaths delineated by Selzer, whose sensitive nature has been warped by the awful things he has seen.

This extraordinary book, although it exasperates, is not negligible. There is nothing in Selzer's literary condition that could not have been cured by an hour's consultation with, for example, Dr Leavis or Dr Eliot. Although those eminent practitioners are dead, they have left behind text-books which are of great help to the afflicted. Even the treatises of the late Dr Quiller-Couch may still be of value in this sort of case. *Mortal Lessons* can be recommended to medical students in search of more colourful accounts of anatomy than are to be found in the standard manuals. It will be a valuable source of texts for the examiners in the Cambridge English Tripos. Members of the general public will enjoy much of it, but should be warned that it may drive them to suicide.

Mugging as a Social Problem, by Michael Pratt (236pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul, £11.95, 0 7100 0564 4) is a detailed study of the phenomenon of mugging, or "robbery of personal property in the open following sudden attack". The author, a principal in the Criminal Investigation Department at New Scotland Yard, has applied the techniques of sociological analysis to a random sample of over 1,000 muggings which occurred in the Metropolitan Police District in the mid-1970s, and set them against a background of "social determinants" such as ecology, deprivation and race. Suggesting the short-term and long-term steps which could be taken to remove the conditions which create muggings, and to reduce the risk of being mugged (the incidence of the crime is currently doubling in London at the rate of once every four or five years), Michael Pratt provides an insight into the background motives and methods of the typical mugger.

success among readers conditioned by our best contemporary writers and by their inferior brethren in the media to long for the stimulation of representations of violence and sexual activity. In these respects the book is very much a manifestation of the decaying literary culture of our time.

Prehensile portions

By Anthony Harris

JOHN NAPIER:

Hands
176pp. Allen and Unwin. £12.50.
0 04 611004 6

Writing about a single, specialized subject is difficult. The author must somehow satisfy his own expertise, and make at least some appealing gestures to his peers in the discipline, yet he must also touch a common nerve within the animal he may know little about: the wider reading public. I approached *Hands* fearful of false wit and genuine bombast, or, worse, of finding yet again a subject in which I delight badly mauled in a vain attempt to gain wider appeal. But John Napier has succeeded both in informing and in being readable, probably because, despite his unmatchable erudition, garnered from a lifetime's study of the hand, he is fully aware that what we know is still inadequate.

Hands, then, is not a definitive book, nor is it the fluff his publishers seem to think it is, with their unworthy list of questions on the cover: "Did you know that South American Monkeys have fingerprints on their tails?" It is often a provocative book, in the very best sense of forcing our thought along new lines. For example, designers would be well advised to read the section on "Prehensile Patterns in Primates". Here Professor Napier clearly demonstrates, with specific reference to a hand-held sander, that many tools are very badly designed, with little knowledge of the hand's capabilities, and its weaknesses.

Another of the book's strengths is its description of the anatomy of hands, written accessibly, this convincingly establishes the structural links which the human hand has with primates. However, it is confusing to suggest that the human hand's ancestry is primarily while at the same time stating its central role in human evolution. The delicate control we possess, as Napier points out, is certainly a product of our nervous system, but one cannot adduce the same arguments to explain

size the hand's antecedents and therefore conclude it to be primitive. The system was primitive — and be mistaken.

The author's sure grip of his subject also falters when he discusses the social implications of gesture as topics better covered by other writers, including recently Desmond Morris in *Manwatching*. Nor is his treatment of "handness" convincing. Primates, we are told, are very skilful eye-handers, left-handed, though humans opt for the right. But the whole question of bilateral asymmetry in form, function, and behaviour, is one of the most complex problems of biology, and with Napier has spent this out, and spent longer on the implications of such gaps in our knowledge. If we cannot account for asymmetry — on the face of it a very simple developmental problem — we should be very careful before applying behavioural theory concerning simpler primates to our own species.

The book is well illustrated, with excellent photographs of the hand in action. Particularly commendable is the attempt that has been made to show the hand in use by dancers, for example, or workmen, so as to reveal just how extensive its "grammar" is. A less sure use is made of reproductions from Dürer, Michelangelo, and Velázquez. These are splendid to look at, but to be asked to compare the hand sculpted with the hand as painted with a few lines may strike art lovers as presumptuous, or comic, and leave other readers bored. Indeed, there are signs of a poor editing, another common defect in specialist books. Here we have "Function of the Hand" separated by thirty pages from "Tool Using and Tool Making", the paragraph being completed by a chapter on "Primate Hands and Fossil Hands".

These, however, are minor blemishes on a sturdy workmanlike book, which brings together the main threads of what we know about hands. It provides many points of departure for artists, physicians, criminologists and designers, and can be read with pleasure by others too. There is a useful bibliography.

STEPHEN KOSS:

The Rise and Fall of the Political Press in Britain
Volume 1: The Nineteenth Century
455pp. Hamish Hamilton. £20.
0 241 10561 7

In Frederick Knight Hunt's *The Fourth Estate*, published in 1850, the author argued that a country's social progress and civil liberty could be judged by the number of its newspapers. "When journals are numerous," he wrote, "the people have power, intelligence, and wealth; where journals are few, the many are in reality mere slaves." If he was right, there most indeed be good cause for anxiety today. A much compacted political press now has to compete for influence with radio and television, while journalistic freedom is threatened by an increasing tendency to monopoly in press ownership. At such a time a major historical study of the British political press could hardly be more opportune, and the quality of Stephen Koss's first volume suggests that the completed (two-volume) work may well become a classic.

Though barely forty, Professor Koss already has an impressive list of publications to his name, and two biographies — those of Sir John Brunner and A. G. Gardiner — have a direct relevance to his present subject. (Brunner was a radical who, in the 1880s, put money into the *Star* and was, as a result, nicknamed "the Star-spangled Brunner". Gardiner appears towards the end of this volume taking over the editorship of the *Daily News*, but will feature more prominently in the next.) Koss has decided to begin where Arthur Aspinall's *Politics and the Press* left off, that is to say in 1850, and the first volume takes us to the launching of Joseph Chamberlain's *Tariff Reform* campaign in 1903. The story opens, therefore, with the final emancipation of the press through the removal of discriminatory fiscal burdens, and ends with its popularization at the hands above all, of Alfred Harmsworth (soon to be Lord Northcliffe).

The author's technique is chronological rather than thematic. He is not one of those "historians" who disdain narrative and write about the past in the manner of social scientists. Though he provides plenty of analysis and evaluation, he does so as he goes along, keeping us constantly aware of the ticking clock. With a subject so large and diffuse it is, of course, exceptionally hard to achieve narrative clarity, and there are moments when the sheer accumulation

of names — of papers, owners, editors and contributors — becomes rather bewildering. But on the whole Koss succeeds in telling us his complex story in a way that we can follow, and with proper reference to the general political history of which it is part. Moreover his writing, always abreast and lively, is often witty as well. His view of personalities and institutions tends to be irreverent, and he clearly sees no reason to make an exception in favour of the press.

What does he mean by the "political press" which, on his argument, once rose but has now fallen, or is falling? Without attempting any precise definition, he suggests that its chief characteristic was "a tacit acceptance of Parliament as the supreme political and social institution of the realm". It was thus a by-product of the golden age of parliamentary government, when the political nation, much expanded though still restricted, was a natural forum, as it were, for serious political controversy. There is enough truth in this concept to justify the use that Koss is making of it, though he would be the first to admit — indeed, his book demonstrates — that it is only very roughly true. The British voting and newspaper-reading public during the second half of the nineteenth century was not all that different from the mass electorate and "admass" of today. The late Victorians had many other interests besides politics, and were capable of finding politics very boring. Even John Morley could complain to W. T. Stead, in 1881, that an issue of the *Pall Mall Gazette* was "infinitely too stiff and crammed with politics"; and by the following decade, Koss tells us, "top-ranking parliamentarians, who had been used to receiving in the press the equivalent of the columns they filled in *Hansard*, were fortunate to secure abbreviated reports of their speeches".

All the same, the press undoubtedly was far more orientated towards politics, and devoted far more of its space to Parliament, from the age of Palmerston to that of Lloyd George — even to that of Baldwin — than at any time since the Second World War (apart from a few isolated episodes such as the Suez crisis). But it was true, as Prince Albert said to Disraeli, that the country was "governed by newspapers". On Koss's evidence, it was not. As a general rule, the press seems to have followed rather than led public opinion, and its influence upon politicians to have derived more from its receptiveness, to the public than from any force inherent in itself. During the period of Liberal ascendancy, the press was mainly Lib-

eral; when the country went Conservative in 1874, the bulk of the metropolitan press went Conservative; at the end of the century, when Unionism was predominant, the press was overwhelmingly Unionist. Such influence as newspapers could have upon public opinion was more likely to be exerted through the dissemination of news than by any process of editorial advocacy. *The Times* did not dare to oppose the Crimean War at the outset, but the dispatches which it published from its correspondent William Howard Russell "turned a mood of euphoria into one of disillusionment". It was on the strength of these dispatches that Abraham Lincoln said — appropriately enough, to Russell — "The *London Times* is one of the greatest powers in the world; in fact, I don't know anything which has more power, except perhaps the Mississippi".

Politicians naturally tend to flatter newspapers, because it suits them to have plenty of favourable attention from the press. Newspapersmen tend to use up in political leaders, partly because they are attracted by the glamour of office, and partly because they hope to obtain exclusive information. Ideally, the two fraternities should have much to do with each other, while preserving a certain wariness and distance. The outstanding press figure during the period covered in this volume was John Thoddeus Delane, editor of *The Times* for thirty-six years (from 1841 until his death in 1877). Like C. P. Scott, perhaps the greatest figure of the next period, he became editor in his twenties — as a result of family connection. Delane was a good picker of men, but above all he knew how to maintain his own essential independence, and with it that of his paper. Though he was on close terms with some political leaders, notably Palmerston, he was always capable of biting the hand that fed him; and when, in 1861, Palmerston offered him the post of permanent under-secretary at the War Office, he refused it. Another friend was Disraeli, but *The Times* did not support him during his first premiership, and during his second backed him only up to a point, turning against him and supporting Gladstone on the issue of Turkish atrocities.

It was typical of Delane to say, early in his career, that he did not like being flattered by Disraeli, except that it pleased him that Disraeli thought him of sufficient importance to be worth flattering. It was equally typical of him that he was "one of the few notables who refused to sit for the cartoonist of *Vanity Fair*. During his editorship the

independence of *The Times* was further emphasized by the fact that its proprietor, John Walter, did not, unlike several other newspaper owners, accept a title from the State. Towards the end of the century the number of honours "for the press increased, and in Koss's next volume the proliferation will be even more marked. (Always an unhealthy symptom, it is sadly in evidence again today.)

What happened in *The Times* in the years following the death of Delane shows, perhaps better than anything else, how much newspapers depended — as to a large extent they always will depend — upon individuals. No paper had a stronger institutional position than *The Times*, yet its reputation plummeted. Delane's immediate successor, Thomas Churnery, was a scholarly man, fluent in Arabic, but not a man of the world and without flair. Disraeli asked if he was "versed in social diplomacy like Mr. Delane", and it was soon apparent that he was not. He did not last long, however, and was succeeded by G. E. Buckle, another scholar, under whom the worst mistake in the history of *The Times* (with the possible exception of its appeasement policy in the 1930s) was committed. This was the publication, in 1887, of articles designed to implicate Parnell in the Phoenix Park murders — articles based on letters that had been bought by the paper, one of which was reproduced in facsimile. Parnell denied the charge and in due course was dramatically vindicated, when the letters turned out to be forgeries. The whole affair cost *The Times* more than £200,000 in money, and the cost in reputation was incalculable. It is hard to believe that such a thing could ever have occurred under Delane's editorship.

During the Victorian period the overlap between journalism and the House of Commons was greater than it

is today. Robert Lowe combined being a leader-writer for *The Times* with being a very active MP. Indeed, at one stage of his career he was contributing regularly to the paper while serving as a minister. John Walter (the Third) sat in the House of Commons as Member for Nottingham, and later for Berkshire. Sir George Newnes, a key figure in British press history, was an MP for ten years. C. P. Scott got into Parliament in 1895, after three unsuccessful attempts. John Morley, Henry Labouchere and T. P. O'Connor were among others who were prominent in both spheres simultaneously. Alfred Harmsworth, however, stood for Parliament as a young man (at Portsmouth), only to be humbly defeated. "The self-styled tribune of the 'ordinary man' finished in third place, behind two Gladstonian Liberals, at a time when the forces of Gladstonianism were elsewhere in retreat." Koss suggests that this reverse may have hurt his vanity more than he cared to admit, and so in some measure have determined his later attitude towards the traditional political establishment.

The hook is full of amusing touches and curious details. Who would have imagined, for instance, that in the 1865 general election the *Daily Telegraph* gave ardent support to a Christian Socialist standing at Lambeth? (Unlike Mr. Ted Knight, he won — though admittedly as a Liberal — and the *Telegraph* applauded his victory as an assertion of the principle of "men and not money"). Twelve years later the *Telegraph's* proprietor, Edward Lawson, had a punch-up with Labouchere on the steps of the Beefsteak Club, because Lawson had deserted Gladstone on the Turkish atrocities issue and was being venomously attacked for doing so by Labouchere in *Truth*. Relations between some top newspapermen may nowadays be equally uncordial, but they seem reluctant to express themselves so robustly.

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Fleur Adcock

A severed head

By Louis Allen

MARGUERITE YOURCENAR:
Mishima on La Vierge du Vide
125pp. Paris: Gallimard.

"There are two kinds of people," writes Marguerite Yourcenar.

Those who thrust death away from their thoughts so that they can live better and more freely and those who, on the other hand, feel that they exist more easily and strongly the more they lie in wait for it in every signal which sends them through the sensations of their bodies or the lizards of the external world. These two kinds of mind never weld together. What some call a morbid mania is for others a heroic discipline.

The comment comes near the end of her essay on the Japanese novelist Yukio Mishima. There is no doubt which of the two kinds of people she respects more: her essay is a piece of hagiography, not dissimilar in intention to a great deal of the writing of Mishima by Western critics. Many Japanese are either more cynical or more impatient, and would perhaps find Mme Yourcenar's collocation of the sage and tolerant Montaigne with the frenetic and sanguinary author of "Patriotism" somewhat out of place. (That book's Japanese title is, incidentally, "Yūkoku," not, as she writes it, "Tokoku.") It is interesting that this gifted ptnicinn — the first woman member of the Académie Française — should publish an essay on the Japanese novelist's s's commitment gesture to the world at large just as she made her entry into that distinguished body some months ago; but not surprising that the essay itself, in spite of its sympathetic analysis of Mishima's writings, should eventually emerge more as biography.

Indeed, this is the problem we will be faced with for a long time to come in relation to Mishima. The life of the man has overtaken the work of the artist, which has become a kind of appendage to the mystery, an answer to the question, why did he do it? A writer obsessed by exhibitionism, voyeurism, homosexuality, sadism, who staged his own violent death by cutting his bowels open in an attempt to get the Japanese Self-Defence Force to rise up against the government, is always likely to overshadow the careful and inventive literary artist. This is a pity, because as an artist Mishima deserves better. It is a pity too for other contemporary Japanese novelists who have not turned their lives into such picturesque scripts and who barely get a look in as a result.

Mme Yourcenar devotes a good deal of her essay to an analysis of those of Mishima's writings which she has read in French or English translation. She has also used the very informative biography by Henry Scott Stokes, who was close to Mishima personally. But she uses this literary material to illustrate "the point that there are things of the final tragedy to come, many years before, in the writings that Mishima was not simply impelled to act as he did by a particular political conjuncture, but was living his life according to a fixed plan in which the often administered *seppuku* would figure step out of the pages of his novels and become reality." So, for instance, when the young Yūichi watches his wife give birth in the novel *Forbidden Colours*, "the bottom of her body seemed to be trying to vomit" an image which anticipates "the belly-ritting" in the short story "Patriotism" in which the poet abdicates, letting the details escape, seems also to be vomiting.

Mme Yourcenar is also aware of Mishima's faults. As other critics have, she criticizes the use of the theme of reincarnation which runs right through the terminology *The Sea of Fertility*. These novels centre

round a character, Honda, whose friend Kiyoski died young. Kiyoski is reincarnated in the person of Iso, one of the young men involved in the officers' revolt in Tokyo in 1936, who is in turn reincarnated in the six-year-old "That prince" Ying Chien, who hangs on to Honda in 1939 when he is on a business trip to Thailand. She herself is reincarnated as Toru, whom Honda adopts in the final volume.

Mme Yourcenar dismisses this theme as crudely thought out. Like Shūichi Katō, who condemns Mishima's Buddhism as shallow, an appeal to the Western public, and the reincarnation element as absurd, she describes it as a grubbing-up of facts badly welded to the remainder of the novel, "sous formes d'on ne sait quel résumé scolaire citant pêle-mêle Pythagore, Empédocle et Cmpanelin". Yet a footnote counsels caution, just as we are about to agree with her. She tells us not to deny parapsychical phenomena out of a conventional merit, because only attentive observation will make the mystery recede — that mystery which is co-terminous with our ignorance. This footnote wants to have it both ways, to be both sceptical and affirmative.

The problem is that *The Sea of Fertility* cannot dispense with the theme of rebirth, which is integral to the narrative, not added from the outside, however perfunctory Mishima's Buddhist lore may be. And it leads inexorably to the final paragraph of the trilogy, which provides Mme Yourcenar with her subtitle. The girl Sotoku, whom Kiyoski had loved, enters Buddhist convent, Honda enviously comes across the last rebirth, the coastguard Toru, and adopts him, only for Toru, to become a monster who turns against Honda, plots his downfall and humiliates him when he is found in sexually compromising circumstances. But when Honda's old friend Kefko reveals to Toru that what has happened to him is not the result of his own ambition and finesse but merely the outcome of Honda's belief that Kiyoski will perpetually re-emerge in other forms, Toru's strength and self-confidence collapse. He falls in his attempt to commit suicide, just three months before his author succeeded in his.

Before his death from cancer, the old Honda visits the convent where Sotoku has become abbess. She casts doubt on his entire plan and denies she has ever met him before. He goes on: "But then if there was no Kiyoski, there was no Iso. No Ying Chien either. Perhaps I myself have never existed?" It is for each one of us to decide this according to his own heart," says the abbess, and she takes him out into the sunbaked courtyard of the convent whose walls enclose a splendid but empty sky.

It is no doubt startlingly appropriate that *The Sea of Fertility* should thus debouch on a void on the same day that its author entered the void of eternity. But his typescript, dutifully delivered to the publisher on November 25, 1970 — Mishima always met deadlines — does not tally with what the *seppuku* says. Mishima's suicide was a demonstration to prove a point. Did he hope by it to rouse the SDF to follow him and the hundred handsomely uniformed acolytes of his Shield Society to the Diet, to punish the decadence of a maintenance too happy Japan? I don't think so. He had been with the SDF long enough not to be surprised at the jeers which greeted his histrionic performance, carefully advertised to selected journalists the day before. No, Mishima was, presumably, as in the film derived from "Patriotism", getting for himself. He was, in that supreme moment, not just script-writer, producer and actor, but audience too.

What was the burden of Mishima's complaint against modern Japan? That "money and materialism rule and modern Japan is ugly." That this is untrue is beside the point. It is what drew Mme Yourcenar to him. She has a fondness for conservatism and for ritual, and a preference for obe-

quity in poetry and religion; she is indifferent to modernity and, significantly when speaking of the death of the poet Couvry (whom she translates), she uses Mishima's terms, calling death the moment when the poet liberates himself. There are phrases here also which she learnt from the alchemists when she was pursuing the figure of Zénon for *L'Ouvre au noir*, which recall what Mishima learnt of the primacy of action over ideas from the neo-Confucianism of Wang Yang-mei: not to educate oneself, but to undergo, *ou maitre les patheins*.

Mme Yourcenar knows, of course, that despite Mishima's awareness of the ultimate futility of political ambition, his last acts will be politicized. That is why her final page will not do, in which she evokes the severed heads of Mishima and his lover, posed bloodless and desiccated on the acrylic carpeting of General Masuda's office, "deux ordinateurs arrêtés dans leur tâche". That terrifying image reduces to silence, in her view, all value judgments on the action, moral, political or aesthetic. This is an odd abdication. Those severed heads justify nothing that the living Mishima attempted or did, nor do they silence judgment. We must surely beware of accepting that all martyrdom is valid for whatever cause? Mme Yourcenar in fact seems to sense this, because she moves into a poetic rather than a philosophical conclusion, when the heads become "two pieces of flesh, borne along by the River of Action, which the huge sea has left for a moment high and dry on the sand, before carrying them off for ever".

The colonel and the dandy

By Lachlan Mackinnon

DAVID MINTER:
William Faulkner
325pp. John Hopkins. £9.50.
0 8018 2347 1

Faulkner was probably the least well-educated novelist of the century, and he came from the paradoxical setting of the most backward region of the most developed nation. Modern literature has tended to be urban; modernism was an affair of cities (Paris, Prague, Vienna, London, New York, Chicago). How Faulkner came to be the major American novelist of his age is therefore an important question, both personally and historically. The great virtue of David Minter's book is that he knows that the question of who a man was is less interesting than that of whom he wished to become. His study of Faulkner is therefore a critical biography, in which the biographical information is arranged around the chronological order of the books, for it is in the poems and the novels that we encounter the "self" to which Faulkner aspired.

Minter conventionally, and rightly, takes the view that the shaping influence on Faulkner's life was his great-grandfather, the Old Colonel, this funambulous character, was a Mississippi folk-hero, soldier and tycoon. In an autobiographical note, Faulkner referred particularly to his writings. A deeper fascination with the old man's variety was admitted as, through the Sartoris and Compson families, Faulkner explored what it meant to have had an inadequate father and an overpowering grandfather. Faulkner's love for the antebellum properties was a way of his concern to give property and make himself a gentleman was an once a drama of rebellion and away of transcending the material and condescension with which he was generally viewed.

The Old Colonel is one of the

types to whom Faulkner turned for an exemplar: the other was the *fin-de-siècle* dandy whom he imitated in dress and art as a young man. Faulkner's poems are strangled, decadent utterances in which what is to be said is repressed into sheer manner. This side of his character remained present in the novels as the Keatsian vision which lurks behind them all, and whose terms he used to discuss his favourite work, *The Sound and the Fury*.

In *The Sound and the Fury* Faulkner invents an urn both for himself and for Caddy, his "heart's darling". Minter properly stresses the significance of Faulkner's discussion of this book, and the crucial way in which Caddy embodies the love and tenderness he sought. Minter is interesting about the way in which Faulkner turned his extra-marital affairs with younger women into re-enactments of the Quentin-Caddy relationship, and concluding about the persistence in Faulkner's psyche of the image of an androgynous, incestuous partner.

Sensibly, Minter does not press too far a suggestive point he makes about the recurrent image of the horror of menstruation in Faulkner's career: sensibly, because he is aware that Faulkner was not unconscious of his psychic disorder. Faulkner's internal divide was not unusual; what was was the unique fruitfulness, he achieved from deliberately balancing the masculine against the householder, and Minter rightly focuses on this.

We are provided here with rather less detail about the actual process of writing than Joseph Blotner had room for in his capacious *Faulkner* (1974). This does not damage his argument, for it is the finished works which most clearly reveal their author and his purpose. Minter is good on the incredible incompetence of publishers faced with these books. Time after time great stories and novels were rejected outright. But Minter judiciously solves the publishers' blame for Faulkner's repeated money troubles, which were almost wholly of his own and his wife's making. Faulkner oscillated between extravagance and worry in a

pattern which no funding could last terminated.

It is indeed another echo of the pattern of his life. After each bout of creativity Faulkner sank into almost autistic depression, a state that he would never write again. It was principally at these times that his alcohol problems got out of hand. Minter makes it clear that behind the problem lay, at least in part, his renewed quest for Caddy figure, "Little Sister Death". He quotes, for instance, the heart-breaking story of the psychiatrist who, after giving Faulkner the electric shock therapy he accepted, saw him seeking affection and reassurance like a child. Again, Minter suggests with some perspicacity that the long silence during which Faulkner wrestled with a *Fin de siècle* period in which he tried to make explicit the implicit moral content of his earlier work, and in doing so robbed them of the perturbations by set up from a more concealed symbolic level.

The one fault in this valuable study is its failure to go further at this point. Hannah Arendt wrote in a footnote to *On Replication*:

How... guideposts for future reference and remembrance are out of... incessant battle, not to be sure; in the form of concepts but as single brief sentences and condensed appositions, may be seen in the novels of William Faulkner. Faulkner's literary procedure, rather than the content of his work, is highly, politically, as he has remained, as far as I can see, the only author to do it.

In his youth, listening to, collecting and rehearsing tales of the Old Colonel, Faulkner learned how a community shapes itself by reference to the past; and how, conversely, the past, if inadequately mastered, can shape and deform the present. The process is public as well as psychological, as well as psychological. Faulkner's true greatness is his engagement with the issue, on both levels, his refusal to allow his work either to invent itself as a retrospective or to expose itself as public concern.



The first stroke of a Picasso, to be seen developing and changing in a series of photographs included in *Viva Picasso: a Centennial Celebration 1881-1981*, a marvellous record of Picasso living and working photographed, written, designed and produced by David Douglas Duncan, and published on May 28 (152pp. Allen Lane. £12.95. 0 7139 1430 3)

The therapist at school

By Anthony Storr

DONALD LIGHT:
Becoming Psychiatrists
The Professional Transformation of Self
429pp. Norton. £10.95.
0 393 01168 2

How should psychiatrists be trained? The question is not easy to answer, because the medical specialty of psychiatry includes within its domain so many human problems which do not warrant a medical label, to the solution of which conventional medical training is largely irrelevant. Psychiatrists are concerned with a number of conditions in which definable, organic defect or disease plays a major part. This is true of most varieties of severe mental handicap; of the various forms of pre-senile and senile dementia which afflict our ageing population; of certain varieties of epilepsy and endocrine dysfunction; and of mental disorders brought about by the misuse of drugs and alcohol. In discerning the causes of, and in dealing with, such conditions, conventional medical training is not only essential, but also adequately meets the needs of the patient.

When we turn to consider the major psychoses, schizophrenia and the manic-depressive disorders, the picture becomes a trifle blurred. Although these conditions are generally treated along conventional medical lines, with drugs, ECT, or other physical methods, definable organic causes are lacking, and social, familial and other psychological factors are recognized as playing an important part in bringing about both improvement and relapse, although their role as primary causal factors is still disputed. But it is in the vast field of the neuroses and so-called "personality disorders" that conventional medical training becomes less and less relevant; and doctors who choose psychiatry as their speciality often find themselves confronted with human problems about which science has nothing to say.

This American account of the training of psychiatrists is written by a doctor who is particularly interested in psychology and the relation between individuals and institutions. Donald Light was himself trained at the University of Chicago, Brandeis, and the Harvard Medical School. Although he

has not always avoided the repetitive verbosity so commonly found in American texts, much of what he has to say is valuable, and he raises problems which those who play the training of psychiatrists on either side of the Atlantic have not yet solved.

The pattern is gradually changing, but American psychiatric training has traditionally been dominated by the Freudian point of view. In England, it is hard to think of any professor of psychiatry, past or present, who has had a psychoanalytical training. In America, membership of a psychoanalytic institute has been, if not obligatory, at least a powerful aid to professional advancement. As Dr Light repeatedly points out: "Most of the faculty and supervisors who taught the residents had training in psychoanalysis, the prestige therapy of the profession. They belonged to, or were affiliated with the Psychosomatic Institute, the area's most distinguished network of practitioners testing its most desirable patients."

Adopting a predominantly psychoanalytic point of view does, in fact, involve a different psychological attitude toward patients from that inculcated by conventional medical training. When Freud abandoned hypnosis in favour of free association, he gave up the authoritarian role of the physician, and handed over considerable initiative to the patient. Many doctors beginning to learn the art of psychotherapy find it hard to give up active intervention and advice in favour of passive listening and interpretive interpretation; and the doctors whom Light studied were no exception. However, it was not long before the residents (registrars and house physicians, as we should call them) adopted the attitudes of their seniors; came to regard ECT as "barbarous"; behaviour therapy as an "escape from personal involvement with patients"; and an interest to community psychiatry as "acting out" and as being "superficial". Psychoanalytic therapy became "the heart of psychiatric residency as they experienced it", and patients who were too mad to be studied, or too uncooperative to benefit from psychoanalytic methods, together with the senile and those suffering from organic diseases, were relegated to a therapeutic scrapheap.

When doctors first embark on the practice of psychotherapy, they naturally begin to become more aware of

their own personal peculiarities and problems, and a good many seek to enhance their knowledge of themselves by embarking on personal psychoanalysis, which, as I have indicated, carries more weight as an additional professional qualification in America than it does in Britain. They also become intensely preoccupied with "countertransference", that is, with the issue of how their own psychological attitudes and personal involvement with the patient may affect his response to psychotherapy.

No one who has practised psychotherapy will deny the importance of understanding one's own psychology if one is to be an effective therapist; but it is also true that intense preoccupation with the subjective, both in oneself and in one's patients, is inimical to the objectivity demanded in other situations. When psychiatry becomes psychotherapy and nothing else the capacity for diagnosis and objective observation tends to decline. Concentration on the patient's inner world leads to neglect of the external world, and especially to the neglect of reports of his behaviour by those close to him. Light gives an appalling example of a resident making a diagnosis of paranoid schizophrenia on totally inadequate grounds. The attachment of such a label to anyone may have serious consequences in that they may lose credibility, have difficulty in obtaining employment, or even lose their liberty. Yet, this residency analysis taught that the unit of diagnosis was the individual, that the only necessary evidence was the individual's actions and accounts in the presence of the therapist, that one therefore did not normally seek information from nurses, social workers, relatives, attendants or other therapists who worked with the person, and that the individual's relation with the therapist was indicative of his or her major problems.

Doctors entering a difficult field in which they are inexperienced may cling to psychoanalytic doctrine as an emotional prop, which leads to lack of judgment as to when should or should not be used. Light quotes an anecdote from the psychiatrist Jerome Frank: "As one young psychoanalyst was heard to remark: 'The wonderful thing about psychoanalysis is that even if the patient doesn't get better, you know you are doing the right thing.' One corollary of the psychoanalyst's expectation that his patient should take

the lead in exploring his own problems and be responsible for himself is that the patient is more open to blame if the analysis is unsuccessful. If the patient does not fully reveal himself, or is uncooperative in other ways, or is "manipulative", it is always his own fault; and many psychoanalysts become expert in rationalizing their failures while continuing to take credit for their successes.

As Light recognizes, his book describes the end of an era; and it is certain that psychoanalytically based training will never again be so dominant in American psychiatry as it was between 1940 and 1970. In Britain, we have been faced with the opposite problem, though in recent years, efforts have been made to remedy this defect by appointing "consultant psychotherapists" as participant teachers in training programmes. The likelihood that psychiatry in Britain will ever be so dominated by psychoanalytic thinking and that it will encounter the dangers so vividly described in *Becoming Psychiatrists* is very slight. Nevertheless, a major problem remains on both sides of the Atlantic which Light does not face.

It is highly unlikely that chemical or sociological methods of treatment will ever solve or more than transiently alleviate the kind of emotional problems which, today, so many patients bring to the psychiatrist. These "problems in living", as Thomas Szasz rightly calls them, cannot and should not be labelled "illnesses", and it is doubtful whether they should necessarily be treated by doctors. The practice of psychotherapy does in fact require a different attitude and a different kind of expertise from that demanded in most areas of medical practice; and many of the best psychotherapists are not medically qualified. Freud's original "Project", a "Psychology for Neurologists" in which neurosis could be explained in terms of neurones, had to be abandoned. Freud continued to hope that neurosis could be explained dermatologically, with ideas or phantasies,

rather than bacteria, trauma, or chemical imbalance acting as causal agents; and this hope, I believe, delayed, rather than advanced, our understanding of neurosis. Psychotherapy is not, and cannot be, a scientifically based procedure in the sense in which a medical treatment can be; for understanding another person is in principle different from understanding a disease. As Isaiah Berlin puts it in *Vico and Herder*: "Understanding other men's motives or acts, however imperfect or corrigible, is a state of mind or activity in principle different from learning about, or knowledge of, the external world."

This being so, it is arguable that psychotherapy should be taken out of the hands of doctors, and that psychotherapists should be given an entirely different form of education. For the training which a psychotherapist needs is much more in the area of the humanities than in that of science. A knowledge of philosophy, of comparative religion, of the history of ideas, and of the great novels of the world is far more help in understanding the motives of human beings and what makes their lives worth living than any amount of physiology, anatomy, or biochemistry.

My hope is that, as psychiatry advances, those doubtful areas in which it is uncertain whether biochemistry detects like a lack of, or superfluity of, a neural transmitter account for behavioural disturbances will be more clearly defined and treated by psychiatrists. Those emotional problems which remain within the province of the psychotherapist (and they will not be few) will increasingly be recognized as part of the human condition, inseparable from our peculiarities as species; the inevitable concomitants of our tendency toward alienation from our own bodies and relation with other human beings which cannot be divorced from our capacity for metaphor, symbol, abstraction and innovation.

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488 pages, £16.50

The Johns Hopkins University Press
Bly House, 37 Dover Street, London W.1

John Coile

Vedji's party

By Janet Morgan

VED MEHTA:
The Photographs of Chachaji
The Making of a Documentary Film
237pp. Oxford University Press.
£8.95.
0 19 502792 2

One photograph of Chachaji is on the front cover. Before a graceful arch he sits - "Respected Uncle" - cross-legged, hands clasped, in an ancient black suit with long lapels and a low button, a clean collar and a pale pink turban. He is concentrating; his old eyes are fixed and his brow furrowed. Opposite him, much more at ease, with one arm outstretched and the other resting on his knee, is the swami. He has an apricot coloured woolen pullover, a creamy turban with one end thrown round his neck like a scarf, and a long white beard straggling down to his waist. "An immortal scene", the producer will say, when they film it on the day after the great storm.

Here on the back cover in another photograph is the producer, William Cran, a Tasmanian-born Canadian. He is sitting before the Taj Mahal with the carefully posed "little family", who have undertaken to make a television film about Chachaji, telling the story of his daily struggle to survive as "in a sense, a reflection of the struggles of hundreds of millions of his countrymen". Cran's companions are Ivan Strasburg, a far-sighted cameraman (on arrival at Delhi airport he produces a complete inventory, in sextuplicate, of their equipment, in order to pacify the customs). Eoin MacCann, an Irish sound recordist; dressed in green and silver; Jane Jackson, the sound assistant; jeans and tee-shirt, plain brown-rimmed glasses and no make-up; Araminta Wordsworth, Cran's aggressive wife (her newspaper is persuaded to send her to India at the same time, for a story on Canadian-Indian relations); Sally Sandberg, "straight strawberry-blond hair and blue eyes", recruited as Ved Mehta's assistant; and Mehta himself. He, incidentally, has been making this list, in keeping with the style of the New Yorker magazine, where *The Photographs of Chachaji* first appeared.

And so "Vedji's party", as Chachaji refers to the crew, go in search of "the fabulous old geezer", as they refer to him. They track him down at the

Pharmacy of Prosperity, where he does strange things with bottles and runs errands for the wily proprietors. He is filmed failing to catch buses, decanting his morning tea from mug to cup, meekly calling at the tax office and the bank, drinking bad tea with his rich relations and being received deferentially by his poor ones. He is taken to Hardwar to bathe in the Ganges. We see him supplanted by a younger man (Chachaji is 83), hired to sweep the verandah by the religious sect in whose house Chachaji has a room.

The story, told very simply and directly, is extremely funny and, because we watch Chachaji gradually taking control, not at all patronizing. The old man is cunning. He may not know what a moving picture is - "He seems to have decided that we are compiling snapshots for a family album" - and on being consulted about the project, he replies only: "You are all my government. I will do whatever my beloved second cousin from America orders." None the less, he obediently shaves himself for the camera, not mentioning that he has already shaved an hour before. He knows exactly when to arrive for family meals, not so early that he is sent off with appetizers only, nor so late that there is no chance of second helpings. He concentrates on his food: "Very tasty" is his laconic commentary. He is particular about the purchases Cran makes for him, especially a red and green striped towel for his bath in the Ganges. "The colours are not fast. It's very thin. It won't last." Cran Sahib's towel is not adequate for the holy dip. He always acquiesces - "Never mind. Let it be." - but in fact he leads Vedji's party a merry dance. Constantly exasperated, they allow the old rogue to embroil them in one bizarre adventure after another.

Quietly, Mehta manipulates them too. It was his idea to make a film about a poor relation who, "ever since I can remember, [has] been coming to our house to gild old razor blades from my father's Mehta persuades Cran that the entire crew should arrive in Delhi at the same time; he convinces them that a family wedding provides a vital theme for the whole film, that a day in the life of Chachaji is, in its delicate and subtle way, enough of a story to sustain the whole picture. Whenever the crew is doubtful, Mehta produces a fresh notion: to go to Hardwar, where he gets them into the Antibiotic Guest House, to visit a village in the country (Dairy



"Henna gets its colouring from being rubbed on a stone. Similarly, a man gets his colouring by being rubbed up against life" are the lines of poetry quoted by Chachaji - the former messenger-clerk for the Pharmacy of Prosperity in New Delhi who is the subject of the book reviewed here - when describing the many struggles in his long life. These photographs, which are taken from the book, show how much Chachaji's face has been given a dignified colouring with the passing of the years.

Research Institute Guest House, accident with motor car, damaged ankle for Cran). It might be Mehta who conjures up the swami, a hallstom, Calcutta, a cremation, Chachaji's near extinction in the Ganges - "Oh my God! He's drowning!" Bill cries out. "It's fabulous!" Writing in the present tense, Mehta seems to control them all. In and around Delhi the fact that he speaks Hindi ad is among his own family of course makes him indispensable to the crew. But this ascendancy is partly offset by the fact that he is blind, so that his taciturn message of the film and the team is all the more remarkable, and entertaining.

The story is beautifully balanced. Mehta finds out how a film is made; the crew discovers something of India. Chachaji, his associates and their surroundings capture the attention of the film-makers, who in turn act, edit and order the material to shape and present their findings in the way they think most appropriate. Even so, the last word is with Mehta, who caps them all by transforming the making of the film into this elegant and witty book; and with Chachaji, who, given a showing on video-cassette, exclaims: "Like it? If I do not like it, who will like it? Wonderful! Was that really me? Was it a dream? It seemed as if I was having a holy audience with myself in Heaven!"

Information please

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Literary estates: information is requested for a forthcoming Directory of Literary Estates in the UK and Ireland from those who either own the copyright in the work of deceased authors or administer literary estates.

David Fletcher,
57 John Street, Penicuik EH26 8HL, Midlothian.

Richard Monckton Milnes (1809-1885), 1st Baron Houghton: any help in tracing his unpublished manuscript letters, for a DPhil thesis on Harriet Martineau. The letters were formerly owned by the Marchioness of Crewe (died 1967).

Valerie R. Sanders,
Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford OX2 6QA.

Reinhold Niebuhr, whose contacts in Britain were many and long-lasting: I would appreciate hearing from anyone with letters, photographs or reminiscences, for a biography.

Richard Wightman Fox,
Department of History, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut 06520.

George Oppen: for a volume of selected letters of the American objectivist poet, copies of letters of general interest, especially on literary, aesthetic, ethical and political matters.

Rachel Blau DiPlessa,
Department of English, Temple University, Philadelphia, PA 19122, or Eliot Walnberger, The Montemora Foundation, Box 336 Cooper Station, New York, NY 10276.

Sydney Parkinson (1714-1771): Scottish-born artist and scientific draughtsman who accompanied Joseph Banks on Cook's first voyage, died on return journey in Cape Town. Location of paintings, sketches, manuscript material and biographical information.

G. Scott Wilson,
3 Kelvin Road, Leamington Spa CV32 7TF, Warwickshire.

Ezra Pound and W.B. Yeats: the Trustees of the Ezra Pound Literary Property Trust have authorized a compilation of a volume of correspondence between Ezra Pound and W.B. Yeats. Information is sought regarding the whereabouts of letters from either poet to the other.

James Laughlin,
New Directions, 80 Eighth Avenue, New York, NY 10011.

Rosemond Tuve: I would appreciate hearing from her friends and colleagues who have letters, anecdotes, memoirs, or photographs, for an authorized biography.

Mrs Margaret Evans,
Tribble Hill, North Pomfret, VT 05043 USA.

Holly Roth, Alan MacKinnon, Simon Troy (the pseudonym for Thurman Wrinler): we have been attempting with no success to locate the heirs of these three mystery novelists and would be grateful to any of your readers who may be able to supply information.

Hugh Van Dusen,
Harper & Row, 10 East 53rd St, New York, NY 10022.

Walter Sickert: any information on the whereabouts of paintings by him from 1927 or after which are in private ownership. The information is needed for research on an exhibition of the late paintings of Sickert which is to take place at the Hayward Gallery next winter.

Andrew Dempsey,
Assistant Director for London Exhibitions, Arts Council of Great Britain, 105 Piccadilly, London W1V 0AU.

W.T. Stead: whereabouts of any papers or letters, for a biography.

Ruth Brandeis,
81 High Street, Olney, Bucks.

T.B.J.: identity of this person, who purchased Vossius's *Epitaphium* (Amsterdam, 1695) at William Windham's library sale in 1870 - lot 502. Windham had bought Johnson's library sale in 1785 - lot 316.

John D. Austin,
Avdon House, Alverstoke, Wincleshire.

Humbert Wolfe, poet, critic and civil servant (1885-1940): I am writing a biography of him, for which I need the consent and encouragement of his daughter; any manuscript, letters, documents, photographs or reminiscences.

P.H. Bagley,
School of Education, University of Park, Nottingham NG7 2RD.

Ogden Wood: expatriate American landscape painter (born New York State, 1851; died Paris, 1912; a student of E. Van Marcke, Wood spent most of his life in Paris, with some time in England; boys are often a feature of his work; little-known. Only any information about the artist or his work.

Charles G. Gillispie,
Department of History, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ 08544, or 35 rue du Pré-aux-Cleres, 75007 Paris.

Kathleen Woodward, author of *Spoken Street* who is interested in her work and should be pleased to hear from any of your readers who could help trace the person who owns the copyright in her books, or who administers her literary estate.

Orinda Owen,
Editorial Director, Chicago Press, Ely House, 37 Dover Street, London W1X 4HS.

Enumerating the enfer

By Timothy d'Arch Smith

PATRICK J. KEARNEY:
The Private Case: an Annotated Bibliography of the Private Case Erotic Collection in the British (Museum) Library
Introduction by G. Legman
Jay Landesman. £45.
Limited edition of 1000 copies

Despite Mr Legman's conjecture, in his extraordinary introduction to this volume, that the Private Case dates from the receipt in 1866 of the "phallic" collection of the antiquarian, George Witt, I would like to suggest that in general "private" cases of books probably evolved rather than get consciously constructed. Someone, somewhere, a librarian, a parent or a schoolmaster, considers a book politically unsound, theologically heretical, or just not quite nice, and consigns it to a place where it cannot be consulted. If I may give two microscopic examples to try to make my point: my nanny's little "enfer" consisted of an uncle's substantial run of *London Opinion* and a copy of *Rupert and the Black Dwarf*, each title in its own way being considered too heady for juvenile perusal and placed high out of reach on a child-proof shelf. Likewise, at the circulating library attached to the bookshop where I worked at the time of the publication of Philip Roth's novel on solitary habits, a customer walked in with a copy between finger and thumb and dropped it on to the librarian's desk. "I don't know about Portnoy," she remarked, "but I've got one of her drawers (reserved for such purposes and the subject of predictable jokes by the mala staff), and there it remained until the library's final closure, when a search of her desk revealed a score of such books condemned over the years by subscribers and by herself, together with an interesting collection of letters relating to the banning of *The Well of Loneliness*, some from the authoress herself.

When such arbitrary censorship is carried out in an institution the size of the British Library, it is remarkable how easily many books, consigned by how many eyes, perhaps a few by the great Panizzi himself, can simply vanish, especially since it was the Library's policy not to enter them in the General Catalogue. This sorry state of affairs was brought to light in 1966 with the publication of Peter Fryer's *Private Case - Public Scandal*. As Mr Kearney says in the preface to *The Private Case: an Annotated Bibliography of the Private Case Erotica in the British Museum Library*, "I am no doubt at least in part to the agitation by [Mr Fryer] and other workers in the field of erotica and related subjects, a decision was made by the Trustees to incorporate the titles and pressmarks of Private Case (PC) books into the General Catalogue."

However, because of lack of time or money or a residual puritanism, there is no official catalogue of the Private Case. There was an unofficial attempt at it in 1936 by Alfred Rose writing under the pseudonym of Rolf S. Reade. In that he incorporated in a bibliography of erotica the British Library holdings with their pressmarks. But Rose died before publication and his book, insufficiently edited, is a sorry affair. Mr Kearney has now done the Library's duty with a good deal more exuberance than the Trustees would have felt necessary for the task.

Geoff Woods' remark on the bibliography of Norman Douglas's *Same Sexes* being "as tangled as an old sewing-basket" is applicable to the whole field of erotica. As in no other sphere of the sciences, the title-page, very backbone of a printed book, becomes totally untrustworthy. Let us take Kearney's 243 volume title-page. The Merry Order of St Bridget, the Rite of Margaret Anson, York, 1887, the author, Mrs. Friends, 1887, the author is not Margaret Anson but John G. Bedgery, the place of publication is not York but London; the printer may have been

John Camden Hotten and the publication date is not 1857 but 1868. At least the title is correct, but even titles have to be carefully watched for they are not always what they seem. *Double Life of Cuthbert Cockerton* (Kearney 549) turns out to be a translation of *Restif de la Bretonne's Anti-Judine*. And so the 1,920 entries in the catalogue have all had to be subjected to Mr Kearney's scholarly scrutiny in order to arrive, in Mr Legman's words, at "these difficult-to-come-by bracketed truths", and wherever possible not only authors but printers and publishers are identified. I can add one snippet of information to Mr Kearney's findings: on the evidence of type-ornaments the printer of *Aleister Crowley's Sacred Garden of Abdullah the Sotrist* (Kearney 510) is the Parisian firm of Philippe Renouard, then (in 1910) at 19, rue des Saints-Pères. (Similar ornaments are used in the same author's *Sword of Song* ("Benares", 1904) and in his notorious (and not-in-PC) *Snowdrops from a Curate's Garden* [1904?].

tween 1877 and 1885 whose usefulness Mr Kearney now threatens to topple) received by the BL in 1900, but the next bumper crop did not arrive until 1965 on the death of Charles Reginald Dawes. Dawes, like so many of the characters mentioned by the compiler and his introducer ("Slapsie Maxie", Elias Gaucher, etc) is best described as "shadowy", but seems to have been a delightful and cultured man, ready to help scholars who wished to examine his fine collection. Judging from his own manuscript fictions which I acquired for a private collector, he had leanings towards homosexuality with a special predilection for the activity described in the title of an erotic play by de Maupassant mentioned by Mr Legman in his introduction; but he was refreshingly eclectic in his collecting tastes and his library considerably enriches the Private Case. A few rarities somehow got away, however, including a copy of a scarce novel, *Suburban Souls* (1901), and a book that was floating round the London



This is not a book of title-tattle and an dits. Following in Mr Legman's spirited and idiosyncratic footsteps, Mr Kearney, firing from both barrels, demolishes pseudonyms like a cowboy smashing bottles in a saloon, and weaves into his staid bibliographical canvas a host of colourful figures, born of their aliases: authors, publishers, illustrators, booksellers, who have had a hand in this bizarre trade almost since the invention of moveable types. Perhaps the strangest of these is Alphonse Monas, a hack-pornographer or "pisse-copie" (Mr Legman's expression) who wrote no fewer than forty-five books in the PC and whose output was so prolific that he had to use one pseudonym: Le Nimmis, Tap-Tap, Cain, d'Abel, L'Érotic, Fackwell, Un journaliste du siècle dernier, Mercadette, Pao-Pan and L'Érotic. Mr Kearney tells us Monas was a civil servant attached to the Paris police and that he devoted himself to spiritualism in later life.

Public librarians find it difficult to justify disbursements of public money for the acquisition of erotic material, fearing the sort of horrified outcry from that portion of the press that simulates - if it does not actually surmount - the literature it is denouncing. At the instigation of Peter Fryer, the BL did actually buy one book (Kearney 923) - one can imagine the treble of the hood that signed the cheque, the whispered injunctions to secrecy - but has otherwise relied on benefactors for its acquisitions, and Kearney has usefully provided provenance where he can for the books under his notice. By far the largest and most renowned bequest was that of Harry Spencer Ashbee ("Pisgus Praxi", author of three discursive bibliographical volumes published be-

There is little to find fault with in this book except for lacunae the lack of indexes for publishers and titles dominated by the PC's main benefactors and to say that a cure must be found for Square brackets are the correct bibliographical symbols to enclose editorial information and, in any case, would be more typographically pleasing. It was Tom Lehrer, in an introduction to one of his songs, who admitted that "dirty books are fun", and Mr Kearney's researches have clearly given him a good deal of amusement, as some of his comments show. Remarks such as "this rather unstimulating performance" and "Both magazines have dedications, one of which is rather rude" are in strong contrast to his predecessors in the field whose glosses always make them appear rather sober-sided. I hear that some officials at BL are a little apprehensive of this book's appearance, fearing an influx of the dirty raincoat brigade. I do not know about a brigade, but my raincoat, of appalling quality, is out, ready for the morning.

An account of the state of the book trade in Italy is provided by *The Book Trade in Italy*, a report on the recent Society of Young Publishers Study Tour of the area written by Colin Ridler. The report contains accounts of discussions with senior publishers, booksellers, and with one of Italy's main literary agents, as well as information and impressions gained from visits to printing works both large and small (the latter including the famous Officina Bodoni in Verona). Copies of the report are available for £2 each from Robert Peabody, 299 Woodstock Rd, Oxford, OX2 7NY. Cheques should be made payable to "The Society of Young Publishers".

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BRITISH MUSEUM PUBLICATIONS

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Return to innocence

By Jennifer Uglow

QUENTIN CRISP:
How to Become a Virgin
192pp. Duckworth. £6.95.
0 7156 1577 7

Mr Crisp claims to have changed: "I have abandoned my life-long habit of scolding strangers before they have had a chance to scold me. Now, in public, like everyone else who has been on television, I wear perpetually an expression of self-satisfaction." *How to Become a Virgin* describes his metamorphosis, which began with the almost accidental publication of *The Naked Civil Servant* and was completed by the interviews, the one-man show and especially the television play which drew worldwide attention and resulted in Quentin, in the winter of 1969, being carried across the ocean as though on a plane.

Poppy his adventures he draws the following moral: "If any reader of this book is the possessor of some habit of which he is deeply ashamed, I advise him not to try to get rid of it in secret but to do it in public. No one will pass him by with averted gaze on the other side of the street. People will cross the road at the risk of losing their own lives in order to say 'We saw you on the telly'. The sign of his return to innocence, through the redemptive medium of the book is full of ridiculous anecdotes, nicely calculated extra-

ganzas: ("Dispell ringlets still hung over a brow not merely pallid but incandescent with moral decay") and the sort of jokes which make one laugh out loud in a library. The whole is retailed in a consciously casual manner in which names are not so much dropped as laid down reverently. Mr Plater, Miss Deterding, Miss Midler - this is less flamboyant and acerbic book than its predecessor, since defensive scorn has been replaced by an air of defensive humility. Criticism is perpetually disarmed as the author makes comic capital of his weaknesses and his fallacies, on and off stage. Only Quentin Crisp could simultaneously defend and apologise for such publicity-seeking egotism. "I quite understand Miss Loren's indignation at being photographed in church at a funeral. I only doubt that I would experience the same reaction as she: inevitably, I would find myself trying to mourn picturesquely." To the last, and with undoubted success, Quentin Crisp follows the guiding principle he acquired from Elaine Stilton on the "mysterious notion of audience control. I don't bother with any of that, honey," she said. "Just get on to like you."

But the legacy of past misunderstanding and harassment endures. One discovers that there is a limit to Crisp's universal tolerance and rather cheeky wit. For even now I could never witness his picturesquely recounted wit-politicism. And the range of public life, like the creation of that iconic persona in *The Naked Civil Servant*, blind with mascara and dumb with lipstick, becomes a way of protecting

personal integrity by ensuring that there are no sensitive private areas left to expose.

A pervasive, regretful irony colours all references to the gay community, for here the story is not of growing acceptance but of increasing exclusion. At first welcomed as a spokesman and applauded for his courage, Crisp soon came to represent the very stereotype of camp effeminacy from which homosexuals were trying to escape. It is said that his initial sympathy for the gay lobby has been eroded by the hurtful rebuffs he has received for his lifestyle, his "Ugly Tomatoes" and his lack of political aggressiveness.

Amazingly, all Quentin Crisp's experiences, whether hilarious or painful, seem to have left his romantic illusions intact and *How to Become a Virgin* ends with him posed on the brink of a new life in America. One can only wish him well and hope, for the sake of future readers, that he continues to ask "What is privacy for if not for invading?"

The inventor, Barnes Wallis died in 1979, at the age of 92, as he had prophesied: "If achievement and fame were synonymous Barnes Wallis would rank among the best known Englishmen of the twentieth century." So writes J.E. Morpurgo in his book *Barnes Wallis: A Biography* (400pp. Ian Allan, £11.95, 0 7110 1149 2), which was first published in 1972 and has now been reissued. The book, which has been reissued, is a biography of the man who designed the V-weapons, the first of which were black and white

John d'Arch Smith

Hatreds in the Holy City

By Bernard Wasserstein

JORJ L. KRAMER (EDITOR):
Jerusalem
Problems and Prospects

243pp. New York: Praeger (available in the United Kingdom through Holt-Saunders Limited, 1 St. Anne's Road, Eastbourne, E. Sussex) \$24.95
0 03 057733 0

On March 28, 1979, the leading Palestinian newspaper, *Dawn*, reported as a news item a dramatic new idea for cutting through the Gordian knot of what is perhaps the most intractable diplomatic problem of the late twentieth century - the question of Jerusalem.

A conspiracy is being hatched in Israel to move the old city of Jerusalem to a new site in [sic] the Mediterranean seashore north of Tel Aviv. It is reported that a decision in this regard was taken at a recent meeting of the Israeli Cabinet. . . . The plan to remove the old city at a cost of thirty-three million pounds sterling is proposed to be completed in fifteen years.

The attractions of such a scheme, particularly given the surprisingly low estimate of cost, are readily apparent. Unhappily for the diplomats of many countries who continue to wrestle with the problem, it has not been resolved by this bold feat of civil engineering. The Holy City remains rooted in the rock of the Judean hills whence it sprang. The report, which appeared soon after the Jewish festival of Purim, arose perhaps from an over-credulous acceptance of a practical joke of the type common at that season.

The incident is revealing both of the depth of potential misunderstanding inherent in the conflict over Jerusalem's future and of the international ramifications of the issue. Even the Roman question, which occupied a position in late nineteenth-century diplomacy which in some respects uncannily prefigured that of Jerusalem more recently, was contested in a narrower arena. The Pope had fewer divisions than the assorted imams, rabbis, and Christian clerics of all denominations who have marshalled their hosts in the unholy way over the city of peace.

As Joel Kramer points out, the Jerusalem question contains two separate elements: sovereignty over the city and the status of the holy places. The former is contested by two national groups, the latter by three religious. But such a definition, while it serves the purpose of analysis, does not fit the real world. The issues of sovereignty and of the holy places, of nationalism and religion, are in Jerusalem inextricably

ably tangled. If it were otherwise the matter would probably have been settled long ago.

Like a Russian doll, the struggle for Jerusalem is a microcosm of larger global conflicts and at the same time contains within itself a seemingly interminable row of ever more petty quarrels. The great religions are themselves riven by sectarian rivalries which pit Coptic monk against Ethiopian priest, Ashkenazi versus Sephardi Chasidim, and so on, almost without end. As Sir Ronald Storrs, the first British governor of Jerusalem under the British mandate, put it, "the local and indigenous Christian communities needed also for their fratricidal tumults no outside provocation". The *odium theologicum* is seldom even worthy of the name - for the issues of dispute tend to be material rather than intellectual. The controversies over such matters as who may carry how many candles down which passageway of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at what hour on which day, helped to produce the Crimean War and continue to bring men of goodwill to blows to this day.

Not only different religions but different groups within the same sect contest the sacred soil. The animosity between Hellenic and Arab within the Greek Orthodox Church in the Holy Land has poisoned its history for decades. The most venomous conflict in the city in recent months has erupted not between Muslims and Jews, nor yet between different sects, but within the sect of Hassidic Jews between the adherents of the Satmarer and Belzer *rebbes*. The stones flung in this war spread ripples as far abroad as Brooklyn, Johannesburg, and Stamford Hill.

At the heart of the city and of the problem, and exhibiting, as it were, all the complexities of the larger issues in perfect miniature, lies the thrice-holy sanctuary of the Haram al-Sharif, on which stood first the Jewish Temple, later a Christian church, and now what is undoubtedly the most beautiful shrine in the Holy Land, the Dome of the Rock (sometimes wrongly called the "Mosque of Omar"). It is not a mosque; it was not built by Omar. The hilltop compound is the one area of Palestine not under Jewish occupation. It is administered by a Supreme Muslim Council set up after the Israeli entry to eastern Jerusalem in 1967. The Council does not recognize (nor is it recognized by) the Israeli government. In fact, according to the contribution to this volume by Uri Ben-Zion, the two authorities operate an uneasy *modus vivendi*. The Haratni overhangs the adjacent Western or "Wailing" Wall (though the latter name gives offence to some) and looks out towards the Mount of Olives in the east and Church of the Holy Sepulchre in the west.

The Muslim-Jewish dispute, over

rights at the Wall (a Muslim *waqf* or religious trust, and by a - suspiciously late - tradition the place where the Prophet tethered his miraculous winged steed, Buraq, before he ascended to the seventh heaven) occasioned an explosion of bloodshed in 1929 which spread across much of Palestine. In 1969, when an enraged Australian Christian fundamentalist set fire to the al-Aqsa mosque on the Haram, a further explosion was only narrowly averted. Volcanic rumblings of religious-cum-national hatred have continued ominously during the past decade, as small groups of Jews have sought to gain entry to the Haram area for purposes of prayer - a proceeding viewed by many Muslims as the first step towards an attempt to reconstruct the Temple. These fears are not always assuaged by the reminder (recited again by the Mayor of Jerusalem, Teddy Kolek, in his introduction to this volume) that Jewish tradition holds that the Temple is already built and is waiting in heaven for the Messiah to come, when it will descend into its appropriate place. As we have already seen, the heightened atmosphere of the Holy City is one in which even larger marvels of engineering are readily imaginable.

Is the Jerusalem question soluble? There can be few cities which have engendered such a variety of ingenious political and administrative blueprints. The United Nations (as is well known) ordained in November 1947 that Jerusalem was to be established as a "corpus separatum" under a special international regime" to be administered by the United Nations. The same UN resolution (as is less well known) called for a referendum in the city after a period of ten years in which residents might express their views as to the future government of the city. In the event, neither internationalization nor referendum (which would probably have resulted in a vote for union with Israel by the Jewish majority in the city) was implemented. A brutal division scarred the city for two decades.

Internationalization, oddly enough, has found favour chiefly with adherents of the one major religion which no longer has any serious prospect of gaining political control for itself. (No less oddly, the internationalization of Jerusalem was suddenly perceived by many Christians as a just solution only in 1947 - exactly when Christian sovereignty over the city was coming to an end; during the previous twenty years of Christian rule there had been no such notions.) Muslims and Jews, with few exceptions, do not take the idea seriously, and in recent years have the Vatican has dropped it.

A more interesting suggestion has been made by Walid Khalidi (descendant of Muhammad's general, Khalid, who conquered Syria and Palestine for Islam). In an article in *Foreign*

Affairs in July 1978, Professor Khalid proposed that west Jerusalem remain the Israeli capital and that east (former Jordanian) Jerusalem become the capital of new Palestinian state. There should be no wall between the two sections and complete freedom of movement and residence. The entire city would be administered by a joint inter-state municipal council and the holy places by a "grand inter-faith council". Finally, suggests Khalid, it would be "supremely fitting" if Jerusalem were to be demilitarized. The schema is framed within a larger proposal for the solution of the Arab-Israeli conflict by the creation of a Palestinian Arab state in the West Bank. A variant of this scheme has been propounded from time to time by Lord Caradon (who served as a British mandatory official in Palestine in the 1930s). Caradon argues that Jerusalem might thus become "the Gateway to Peace". A more cynical view is that such a scheme, requiring as it would an extraordinary degree of cooperative effort by former antagonists, would seem more realistic if placed at the end rather than the beginning of a movement towards general Arab-Jewish reconciliation.

The Israeli attitude towards the Jerusalem question is often mistakenly regarded as monolithic and unyielding. In fact, it is more variegated and flexible than may appear at first sight. The Labour-dominated governments which held office in Israel between 1967 and 1977 were careful to extend only municipal authority over Jerusalem; until the recent passage through the Knesset of the "Jerusalem Law", the Israeli claim to sovereignty in all of Jerusalem was based on *de facto* political control. The Labour Party (which seems likely to win the forthcoming elections) appears ready to agree to extra-territorial sovereignty for the holy places of Islam and an international statute for those of Christianity, provided the rest of the city is recognized as the Israeli capital. Mayor Kolek has for several years sought to sweeten this bitter pill for Muslims with his scheme for a borough system to which Arab residents would exercise municipal control over their own affairs. While these remain the apparent limits of the Israeli negotiating position, there have been occasional hints that Israel might not stop there. On August 12, 1977 (the date is significant: it was soon followed by President Sadat's peace initiative), the then Israeli Foreign Minister, Moshe Dayan, was reported to have said that even east Jerusalem was not excluded as a possible subject of bargaining. And he pointedly continued, by recalling that when David Ben-Gurion was Prime Minister of Israel he had been ready to sign a peace treaty that would have provided for the continued partition of Jerusalem. Dayan, who is leading his own newly-formed party into

the forthcoming elections, has made similar statements again in the past few weeks - without apparent change of mind.

In the present mood in Israel it is unthinkable that any government could survive which contemplated the surrender of sovereignty over any part of Jerusalem other than the non-holy holy places. But Israel is a country of mercurial changes in collective mood. The greater sense of security produced by the rapid growth of the Jewish population east of the former "green line" may perhaps help to create in the future a greater readiness to make more substantial, albeit symbolic, concessions to Arab and Muslim sensitivities. In Jerusalem, after all, more perhaps than anywhere else, symbols merge with reality.

The attitude of successive American administrations has been to regard Jerusalem as a hot potato best not handled until the wider Arab-Israeli conflict has been resolved. In the UN Security Council the United States has joined in unanimous censures of Israeli actions to change the status of Jerusalem. The report of a 1973 Brookings Institution study group (on which the Carter administration's Middle East policy was based) suggested comic "minimum criteria" for a solution to the problem. First, there should be free access to all holy places; second, there should be no barriers between different parts of the city; and third, "each national group within the city should, if it so desires, have substantial political autonomy within the area where it predominates".

At Camp David in September 1978, the failure to secure an agreed American-Israeli statement on Jerusalem, very nearly brought the entire package deal to grief. In the end, Jerusalem was not mentioned in the text of the agreement; instead, an exchange of letters was appended in which the agreement in which the three leaders merely rehearsed their previous positions on the issue. The news of Egyptian-Israeli talks since Camp David have produced no shift in these positions.

Some new ideas for forms of government which would draw in both Arabs and Jews are explored in a final article in this volume by Daniel Elazar. Most of these are open to the objection (recognized by the contributors to the book) that they could not work within the context of a general Arab-Israeli settlement. In isolating and analysing the issues and interests involved (and in making comparisons with Montreal, Brussels, and Belfast), they should prove a useful handbook for peace-makers. Ultimately, however, it strengthens the conviction that the resolution of the Jerusalem (as of the Roman) question will emerge only in the final stage in the Jewish resurgence.

The biffer of the French

By Albert Hourani

MAURICE LARÈS:
L. E. Lawrence, la France et les Arabes
Paris: Imprimerie Nationale.
1980, 655

The study of everything T. E. Lawrence wrote and thought about the French, and all that has been written on him in French, very long and based on a thesis which was even longer, will raise questions in the mind of any university teacher. If research should be exhaustive, need results of it be conveyed in so many volumes? Maurice Larès gives us nothing. Of Lawrence's youthful trips in France we are given detailed itineraries, figures of distances covered, maps, a photograph of a postcard, and much more; to appreciate what he thought of France at that time, the author tells us we need "une étude de ses goûts, de son régime, de son état physique". It is a *de course* we are told, not how much he spent and what he ate and drank.

In the same way, we are given copious lists and summaries of all the books written about him in French, and a graph of the vicissitudes of his life and statistics of the sale of his books in translation. An analysis of letters written by him in French leads to the conclusion that they show "une ignorance grammaticale et une langue de rigueur affligeante". This view of sorrow extends indeed to most of those who have written about Lawrence in French. Their mistakes are listed with solemn and unrelenting disapproval. On peut dire qu'il n'y a pas de "Pillière" à la langue, mais il est moins facile d'écrire Charles Edmond au lieu d'Edmonds. Faced with such reproaches, it is tempting to reply in the words of M. Larès, alas, is by no means

infallible. If his information is copious, it is not always accurate: names are spelled wrongly, and dates and places of publication are given incorrectly or inconsistently. We too can excuse "Rustan Haider" for Rustum Haider, "Aul" for Abdul-Hadi. Given three different names in three places, Sir Henry Grahame changed into Sir George Grahame within five lines, and Gabriel Pusux, a distinguished public servant, becoming "Gabriel Puau, journaliste"; but it is more difficult to accept Sir Edward Grey being described as Ambassador to France, Malcolm Macdonald as the Prime Minister, Abdullah as the third son of the Sharif Husain and Fayçal as the second (a mistake which obscures an important strand in the complex network of relationships within the family).

Inside this fat book, however, there is a thin and quite interesting one struggling to be free. Larès shows convincingly that Lawrence's opposition to French policy in the Near East did not express a deep and lifelong hatred of France. In his early years he showed no such hatred; if his grammar was "affligeant" he read widely in French, and some of his reading, in military history, *chansons de geste* and Provençal poetry, helped to form his imagination. His opposition to France during the First World War and at the Peace Conference can be explained in other ways: a certain view of British interests, a certain sense of justice, and, at the stage of peace-making, that determination to impose his will on events which was perhaps his strongest motive (but even then there were moments when he seems to have worked for a reconciliation between Fayçal and the French). In his zeal to explain Lawrence, Larès sometimes goes too far. When he writes of his being moved more by a reaction of fear or defence than of attack, he ignores the light-hearted combativeness with which Englishmen of that generation entered into the great game of

imperial rivalry and expansion. In a famous letter to Hogarth, Lawrence suggested that "we can rush right up to Damascus, and biff the French out of all hope of Syria. It's a big game, and at least one worth playing. Won't the French be mad if we win through?"

For their part, French officers and officials did not always regard him with dislike or hostility. Surprisingly enough, Larès is one of the first scholars to have made much use of the documents on the Arab revolt, and on the Arab question at the Peace Conference, in the archives of the French foreign ministry and in those of the French army in Vincennes. They have much light to throw not only on French policy but on the politics of the Arab movement, about which the French had their own good sources of information.

They have been used in a few articles, but J. K. Tannenbaum and others, but not in a full study. Larès's interest is too strictly focused on Lawrence, and his grasp of Near Eastern realities seems too shaky, to give us such a full study, but he does show clearly how wide was the spectrum of opinions about Lawrence among French officials. Some disliked him, some were simply puzzled, some liked and respected him. As early as August 1917, the French military attaché in Cairo, Dnyne de Saint-Quentin, described him as "probably the most striking figure of the British army or administration in the East", while recognizing his hostility to any French action in Arabia, Syria or Palestine, he pays tribute to his frankness, loyalty, extraordinary memory, and soundness of judgment.

British officials who worked with Lawrence also had mixed feelings about him, and legends grew out of their bewilderment. The French legend was different from the British: it was that of the implacable enemy of France, the agent of the Intelligence Service who continued to serve his masters even after he seemed to have retired from public life. The last part of the book traces the growth of this legend, which sometimes took absurd forms: the first French biography of Lawrence, published soon after his death, has him plotting the Druze revolt of 1925, raising 40,000 tribesmen to oppose Russian plans in Afghanistan, and perhaps meeting his death at the hands of the Intelligence Service itself. Something of these stories, as Larès remarks, has spilled over into English books about him as well.

Intermingled with the growth of the legend has been another process: an attempt by French writers to resolve the enigma of this strange figure who seems to have caught their imagination during and after the years of the Resistance. It may be that they lay too little emphasis on the rigours of an

Evangelical upbringing and the effects of the English class-system on someone conscious of having lost his rightful place in it, and too much on sex and the search for the absolute. Larès is right to warn us against the excesses of metaphysical explanations: "Tout est trop mécanique, factice. La galeité, le goût de la farce, l'ingéniosité, la diversité des connaissances. Tout est sacrifié à cette 'trajectoire spirituelle'".

Nevertheless, there is something of value in the writings of those who could understand, because they themselves shared it, the temperament of a man who lived through myths, shaping his actions in accordance with an image of what a heroic life should be, and then reshaping them in the telling. Louis Messiaen, the greatest Arabic scholar of his generation, knew Lawrence in the Near East during the war, entered Jerusalem by his side, and was always haunted by the thought that what Lawrence did he might have done; in two brief writings he captures something of the spirit of Lawrence, unconventional, almost unworldly, with the humility of a young girl broken by harsh intonations, having nothing of the contemplative, finding no spiritual ideal in communion with his Arab colleagues except "un élan vers le danger", and trying to flee from some "cancer inguérissable de sa chair".

André Malraux's claim to have met him is more doubtful. His description of Lawrence, looking "extraordinarily elegant", in the bar of some great hotel in London or Paris, is not quite convincing, but there is some validity in his picture of a man tormented by his own uncertainty: the Arab revolt was not really a triumph, the book he wrote about it was not quite a work of art, he himself was not what he should have been, his real self eluded his grasp down long corridors of pursuit.

The bourgeois interest

By M. E. Yapp

BASSAM TIBI:
Arab Nationalism
A Critical Enquiry
Edited by and translated by Mation Farouk Sluglett and Peter Sluglett
280pp. Macmillan, £20.
0 355 23714 5

This is an ambitious book. In a mere 183 pages (admittedly buttressed by sixty-four pages of notes and thirty-two pages of bibliography) Bassam Tibi has undertaken three tasks: to analyse various theories of nationalism and to present his own; to write a history of Arab nationalism; and to examine the ideas of Saïl al-Husri, perhaps the foremost propagandist for what has been the most widely accepted view of Arab nationalism. This book was originally written as a doctoral thesis and first published in German in 1977, and is now clearly and convincingly translated and edited by two specialists in modern Arab history.

The review of theories of nationalism is less interesting for its porosity, treatment of selected theories of

nationalism than for what it reveals about Tibi's own view of that phenomenon. For Tibi's view is functional or instrumental: he holds that nationalism is a doctrine, designed to serve certain purposes, and he judges the merits of theories by the extent to which they may have served purposes which he deems appropriate. For example, he argues that in modernization theory nationalism is adopted as a suitable ideology for the prosecution of industrialization and in so far as it fails to achieve that end the theory is judged inadequate. By this mode of reasoning he is led to his general conclusion that nationalism, as currently practised in the Third World, is an ideology designed to serve the interests of the national bourgeoisie, to his condemnation of that doctrine of nationalism, and to his assertion that what is required is a class analysis of the model of that of Frantz Fanon.

In his formulation of the problem, Tibi appears to place the cart before the horse. Modernization theory asserts that nationalization is adopted to promote modernization (rather than industrialization alone) but that the process of modernization (and especially urbanization) gives rise to nationalism by obliging men to select

new political identities to fit the new conditions of their lives. It is perfectly true that in some areas, notably in Africa, one can observe states setting out to promote nationalism (a phenomenon sometimes described as *ersatz nationalism*) but this is by no means the dominant pattern even in the Third World. Tibi's Nationalism theory, therefore, imposes a strong bias to his treatment of the subject.

The brief history of Arab nationalism which fills the second part of the book should not detain the reader for it is not very good history, being weak on fact as well as interpretation. Tibi's characterization of the Ottoman state as its land-holding system, and of the Caliphate as a *tabula rasa* in his dismissive treatment of Islamism; modernism; there is no mention of its crucial role in legal reform; and he depends too heavily on George Antonius's *The Arab Awakening*, a book which he describes as the standard history, still unsurpassed. Impressive as Antonius's book was when it was written, it has been shown by many writers to be wrong on several important points, one of which is its failure to note the almost complete absence of Arab Muslims from the ranks of Arab nationalists before 1908.

Tibi also seriously misrepresents the conclusions of C. E. Dawo, who rejected the theory that Arab nationalism represented the new bourgeoisie and argued that they came from the traditional élite. This view is transmitted by Tibi into a statement that Arab nationalism came not only from the petty bourgeoisie but also from large landholders and big bourgeoisie. Thus a statement which militates as a statement against a class theory is transformed into a mere qualification of such a theory.

Tibi argues that Saïl al-Husri's major contribution to Arab nationalism was to switch it from a French style of "liberal democratic nationalism" to a German style of "linguistic nationalism". The distinction requires some qualification: it is a linguistic element in Arab nationalism before 1914 - but it was certainly al-Husri who elaborated and popularized the new view and it is reasonable to regard him as the central figure in the growth of the popular concept of the Arab nation as the collective of native Arabic speakers. Curiously enough Tibi devotes most attention to al-Husri's dealings with local (Syrian and Egyptian) nationalism, and does

not discuss al-Husri's own remarkable conversion to Pan-Arabism, although that episode might have been Tibi's argument. As long as the Ottoman Empire existed al-Husri was an Ottomanist and specifically an Ottomanist and specifically an Ottomanist. The Pan-Arab concept seemed that the Pan-Arab concept was capable of realization. Therefore, al-Husri tried to restructure that hope in Iraq. Despite his occasional mystical stress on the givenness of Arab identity al-Husri was essentially an instrumentalist. Ideologies were designed to serve states and education, by manipulation, etc. It was al-Husri's misfortune that he could never find a state to fit his ideology.

Whether Tibi will have better luck with his class ideology, which he will with his linguistic concept, remains to be seen. This is an ambitious book but it is too ambitious. More straightforward account of al-Husri is given in William C. Cleveland's *The Making of an Arab Nationalist* (Princeton, 1971).

The bureaucrats of Baghdad

By Garth Fowden

JOHN KENNEDY:
The Early Abbasid Caliphate
A Political History
Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981. £14.95.
0 674 00922 9

The average Westerner, if asked to recall everything he knew about the Abbasid caliphate, would not need more than the proverbial postage stamp. Thanks to the *Arabian Nights*, though, the caliph Harun al-Rashid is known to the quintessentially romantic as an arbitrary despotic and autocrat, and begins to fill of plans and intrigues, none too securely locked. (One's first arrival in the capital of the caliphate is Baghdad, the city of the Abbasid caliph, founded in 762 by 809; but anyone reading through Hugh Kennedy's book, concentrated study of the early Abbasids (750-825) will quickly realize that the subject has much more to offer than the ambiguous and rather unimpressive Harun.)

The last eighth and ninth centuries saw the maturation of the Islamic empire. During most of the period before Muhammad's death of the caliphate was possible only in the towns - in Arabia, for example. Abbasid interests were for practical purposes confined to Mecca, Medina and the holy routes.

Like the later Roman emperors, the Abbasids recognized that "divide and rule" was a sound principle of domestic as well as foreign policy; and the Zagros Mountains provided the obvious administrative (and all too often political) caesura between east and west. But provincial separatism was still a problem, and was if anything encouraged by the bureaucratic centralization fostered under Harun's all-powerful Barmakid ministers. The Abbasids were another recurrent catalyst of discontent, since they quickly concluded that the Abbasids, for all their pious words, were no less pragmatically secular than the hated Umayyads. "The Abbasids' struggle with all these dissident elements is best studied in the reign of their strongest representative, Mansur (754-775); and in two chapters of exemplary lucidity Kennedy traces, firstly Mansur's response to his enemies, and then the way in which he consolidated his position by concentrating power in the Abbasid family, cultivating the army (where soldiers could earn about forty times an unskilled labourer's wage), and founding his prestigious new capital at Baghdad, which probably had half a million inhabitants by 800.

If we accept Kennedy's proposition that the main problem facing the early Abbasids was whether or not it was possible for the caliph to rule, as opposed to merely responding to pressures, then Mansur's success followed him, culminating in the destructive civil war that broke out after Harun's death, was compounded by succession disputes within the Abbasid clan. Harun's division of the empire between his sons Amin and Ma'mun was more than nine - a solemn agreement made at Mecca in 802 regulated the brothers' relations, but if Harun expected Amin to be deterred from breaking it by the prospect of having to divorce all his wives and make fifty pilgrimages to Mecca, he was to be posthumously disappointed. Kennedy concludes his historical narrative with a picture of an empire debilitated by war and no longer dominated by the Abbasid family. Power had been irretrievably fragmented, and even the army, once an Abbasid preserve, was now raised and run by private individuals. He

are the roots of the gradual dissolution of the caliphate into warring principalities in the later Abbasid period; and in the disruption of Mesopotamian economy it is possible to see the roots of the long-term socio-economic decline of the region that has only been arrested in the present century.

Kennedy concludes his book with two chapters on the provinces and the rebellions respectively. Of the provinces, he chooses Khurasan and Africa for closer scrutiny. Khurasan was the Abbasids' power-base, and of crucial importance also to the wealth and strength of the caliphate. But Africa is a perverse choice, so peripheral to the empire that soon after 800 it passed irretrievably beyond Abbasid control. Kennedy would have clarified his narrative had he said more about Syria. Instead, for despite its decline the province still played a significant political and military role. In particular, its northern part, adjoined the Byzantine empire, a foreign power that the Abbasids loved to hate, for reasons of internal propaganda not unfamiliar to their modern heirs in the region. The fact that the last Umayyad caliph had fled from Damascus but from his capital not to Baghdad but to Raqqa, highlights the enduring strategic and other attractions of northern Syria. Kennedy makes little of this, and in addition leaves the uninitiated reader in the dark about the origins of the long-running feud between Qaysites and Kalbites that made Syria so difficult a province to rule throughout this period.

But this is a carping criticism of a book whose narrative and synthetic elements are co-ordinated with unusual skill. One of the Abbasid historians' major problems is how to deal with literary sources whose concept of causation is, for western tastes,

at least, personal to the point of whimsy. Can the mighty Barmakids, for example really have fallen because Harun al-Rashid liked his sister's company so much that he persuaded Ja'far the Barmakid to contract a formal marriage with her so that they could decently spend more time together, and then discovered that the couple had presumed to have sexual intercourse? Kennedy consistently probes behind the gossip for the underlying political and social trends, displaying a sane scepticism not always apparent even in his recent predecessors.

Not the least interesting feature of this book, though, is what it tells us about the state of early Islamic scholarship itself. Compared to works on classical, Byzantine or western medieval history, the narrative flows smoothly along, and lean footnotes confine themselves for the most part to Arabic literary sources. The material is mostly succession disputes and provincial rebellions, and the scholar's skill is revealed in his ability to draw wider conclusions from what he sees between the lines in the chronicles and histories (often of high quality) on which he draws. What is wanting in the latter case is the result purely and simply of lack of surveys and excavations. Closely connected with this paucity of archaeological material is the inadequacy of our knowledge of the Abbasid empire's provinces. Even our understanding of major monuments still standing in major cities (the Great Mosque in Damascus, for example) is all too often distorted by speculations that have not been or cannot be verified. In short, there is room for a lot more work in this field, and those contemplating such work will be grateful for the clarity of his historical narrative.

Handwritten note in Arabic script, likely a library or personal mark.

Emancipating the West Riding

By Kenneth O. Morgan

DAVID CLARK:
Colne Valley
Radicalism to Socialism
225pp. Longman. £12.
0 582 50293 4

Colne Valley occupies a unique place in the pantheon of British radicalism. Almost since its creation as a parliamentary constituency in 1885, it has been a battle-ground between the Labour and Liberal varieties of the British left. It founded the first constituency Labour Party in Britain, the Colne Valley Labour Union, in 1891. It was a stamping-ground for Tom Mann in the mid-1890s. Most dramatic of all, it was the meteoric emergence of young Victor Grayson in 1907, when he defeated both Liberals and Conservatives in a three-cornered by-election, despite the official hostility of the Labour Party itself. Colne Valley appeared to propel socialism into the very centre of British politics, and this remarkable by-election had a powerful impact on the other parties. Its consequences ranged from the British Socialist Party on the far left to the anti-Socialist crusades of Unionists on the far right. Grayson himself, with his extraordinary career from instant rise to alcoholic oblivion, his later departure to New Zealand and final, mysterious disappearance, has become a folk hero of rare fascination.

The story of Grayson and Colne Valley has long needed detailed investigation, and this has now been provided by David Clark's *Colne Valley: Radicalism to Socialism*. Mr Clark's own career is an unusual one. He was himself the Labour MP for Colne Valley in 1970-74, and evidently pursued his researches into the history of his constituency while serving as its representative at Westminster. Like Grayson before him, Clark fell at the hands of a Liberal in February 1974, and now sits for South Shields, but his book reflects a rare involvement with, and affection for, his subject. In truth, it bears some of the signs of having been the spare-time pursuit of a public figure whose main energies were expended elsewhere. It is too scrappy, with a mass of sub-headings and incidental tables which make it read at times more like a series of notes than a continuous history. The attempt to connect Colne Valley with wider developments in the world of British socialism or of the trade union movement are not very convincing, while the sub-title seems to be belied by Clark's own electoral experience in 1974. Grayson himself remains a shadowy figure; readers interested in him should turn instead to Reg Groves's *The Strange Case of Victor Grayson*, by far the best account. The period between Grayson's victory in July 1907, and his defeat in January 1910, which saw renewed tension with the ILP leadership and Grayson building up new links with Blaydon and Hyndman in the cause of a quasi-Marxist nationalist socialism with xenophobic overtones, is barely discussed.

On the other hand, this book is immensely useful as a compendium of local information, devotedly culled from obscure local Labour records and newspapers. It includes much fascinating detail on the political and industrial aspects of Labour's pioneering efforts in this remote, primarily woollen and worsted industrial valley in the farthest fringe of the West Riding. It will, therefore, occupy a honourable place in that local literature which helps us to build up the mosaic of the working-class struggle in its earliest, almost prehistoric, phase.

Colne Valley was not obviously predestined territory for the birth of British socialism. Among its scattered, fertile villages, trade union membership was low, a mere 1.7 per cent of the population in 1891. The Nonconformist chapels, so often a prop of the early Labour movement elsewhere, were not so dominant here. From Slaidwhite in the east to

Mossley in the west, Colne Valley seemed caught up in the family pastoralism of local small cotton and woollen manufacturers, represented by the wealthy Liberal, Sir James Kitson, who sat as the MP from 1892 to 1907. Nevertheless, the Colne Valley Labour Union came into being here in 1891, followed by a rash of Labour clubs and Labour churches, and many impressive successes in local elections. It was evident socialism, rather than mere "Labourism" that inspired the CVLU, as the adoption of Tom Mann as parliamentary candidate in 1893 suggested.

It was always, too, a highly localised, introspective organization, with many divisions within the valley itself. Slaidwhite in particular, where most early members of the union came from, was a world of its own. Nearby Marsden boasted an esoteric socialist festival known as "the Red Stir". When the ILP met at Bradford in its inaugural conference in January 1893, Colne Valley kept aloof and sent no delegate. Even though the CVLU did affiliate a year later, its relationship to the national ILP was always ambiguous, and this was to cause Grayson trouble in 1907. The first wave of Labour activ-

ism petered out in 1895, when

Mano, now emerging from a brief

Christian Socialist phase into a

distinctly more hedonistic version

of Marxism, came bottom of the poll,

and no Labour candidate contested

Colne Valley in either 1900 or 1906.

But membership of the Union con-

tinued to flourish. Philip Snowden, a

popular local evangelist, recalled that

his branches "were composed almost

exclusively of working people. It was

rare indeed to find a middle-class

person associated with them."

When the Liberal retired to the

Lords in the summer of 1907, Colne

Valley was ready for action, the

Lib-Lab entente in faraway London

notwithstanding. Further, in the

twenty-six year old Victor Grayson,

lapsed trainee for the Unitarian

ministry, it had an eloquent, charis-

matic candidate of the radical

view. Grayson and Colne Valley

went it alone in 1907. The Labour

Party executive refused to accept his

candidature on technical grounds,

mainly perhaps because of opposition

to him from David Shackleton and

other senior trade unionists. The ILP

also failed to endorse him. On the

other hand, it was clear that Grayson

symbolized the deep dissatisfaction

of those critics in the ILP who

resented being shackled to the

"economism" of the trade unions,

and the political pact with the Lib-

erals. At the highest levels in the

party, Keir Hardie, always ready to en-

courage local activism of however un-

orthodox a form, sent a message of

support, as indeed did Snowden.

Grayson's message was uncompli-

cated and inspiring. "I want emanci-

pation from the wage-slavery of

Capitalism" (Clark seems to exagger-

ate the "Ethical" nature of his

socialism). As such, Grayson was

returned triumphantly at the top of

the poll.

His subsequent record in the

House was a disappointing one, marked

more by quarrels with his Liberal

fellow-members than by effective

assaults on the Liberal govern-

ment or the capitalist system. There

was even a public dispute with

Keir Hardie over the socialist

"unity" campaign. After his defeat in

January 1910, (a period not covered

by this book), Grayson soon burnt

himself out. He drank heavily, he

married a fashionable actress, he

consorted with bellicose jingoes far

removed from the mainstream of the

Labour movement. During the war,

he remained in unproductive exile.

Finally, in 1920, a haggard, dishevel-

ed, prematurely aged figure, he ap-

peared abruptly from the lobby of

a London hotel, and was once again

dead. The time and place of his

death remain unknown. For all the

history of British socialism, Colne

Valley thus largely remains a

symbol.

Two brief general conclusions

may be drawn. First, the Colne

Valley, like Morley before it, was

perhaps, was a very private one, its

own inbred loyalty and

devotion to its own

Labour movement even in the face

of a more liberal and

tolerant Liberalism.

Secondly, Grayson's

movement seems an isolated

phenomenon, almost

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an erratic, isolated figure, the

product of his own

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tion to what I hoped". Cochrane, "with all his defects", was commended as "a most obliging good-natured man, eminent for patience, cheerfulness and bibliography, who will rejoice to do for any member, still more for any member like you, whatsoever is really in his power".

Carlyle's membership—characterized by his persistent failure to comply with practically all the Library's regulations—continued fairly happily, and he eventually succeeded Lord Clarendon as President in 1870. His most determined later intervention in the affairs of the Library was in 1852, when at the time of Cochrane's final illness he wrote to Lord Lytton about the first librarian, with rumblings of a row to come.

I am much shocked at your news of poor Cochrane's case, of which I had heard nothing. Poor old man, I should be heartily grieved to lose him; and to his Office too, with all his faults, it may be a loss. True, he by no means shone as a distributor of books—and could never bring himself to believe that the wish of everybody without restraint to anybody cannot by any skill be complied with—but he was full of good nature, did much really useful work in a quiet lucid way, in spite of his indolence; and for practical help as a Bibliographer, he was far the first I ever met with in this country; and I believe we need not hope to find his match in that respect.

My name, I understand, is still on the Committee; but I have taken almost no share in any kind of Library business since those old days when you used to attend. Of course, if we lose poor Cochrane, it will behave us to use all possible care to get a fit successor. If I have anything to do with it (which seems doubtful), I can only engage to endeavour with all my industry to get the fittest attainable. Mr Gladstone's friend appears to be an interesting man; and his qualifications, if the present evidence of them, will deserve to be well investigated, and candidly and even charitably estimated: but I should fear, on the first glance of the business, his being a Foreigner would prove a very heavy drawback—heavy in appearance, and almost as heavy in reality, for the keeper of an English Popular Library, Panizzi, as I have been obliged to estimate him in painfully travelling, his dim eyes and labyrinthine is by no means an instance of the *preferability* of Foreigners to natives even for such a post as his. As Librarian to a Prince, King, or Private Nobleman, Foreigners, or Native, *caeteris paribus*, might be nearly indifferent; but I imagine, only there. [MS London Library]

The threat to his equality was posed by Gladstone's imperative recommendations of his friend the refugee Italian lawyer Giacomo Filippo (later Sir James Philip) Lacaita, newly arrived in England from Naples, where he had supplied Gladstone with information about Garibaldi's military career. Carlyle appeared to promise a "convenient berth" for Gladstone's displaced protégé, but Gladstone had not reckoned with Carlyle's continuing capacity for inflaming himself and others against this debt disposition of a personally unknown candidate whose circumstances of life were all too reminiscent of the odious Panizzi. Carlyle felt that the committee contained "a dear majority of malleable material, some of it as soft as butter" in favour of Gladstone's candidate. Several letters were written to prominent members, including Arthur Helps, who was treated to a long disquisition on May 12, 1852, a week after Cochrane's death.

The London Library is in Danger—Your man, Ross, whom I once saw long ago, and of whom I have heard authentic testimony lately seems at present decidedly the most promising; but there are already five or six other native candidates, all of them, I fancy, superior to Ross in fitness to the young Neapolitan. As yet, I have not arrived on our shores, when Gladstone has decided to lead in over the belly of both Rydman and Ross, and make King over us—I myself am struck down to the earth with

Influencia, incapable of stirring out for near a week past, and forbidden even to speak, above five words in the half hour, under penalties. I sent a message to Forster last Saturday, solemnly admonishing to delay and deliberation; Forster's answer was that he went with me to the letter; but that Gladstone, Lord Lytton & Co. were "stirring Heaven and Earth" to bring in their man; and that, from the present composition of the Committee, "was not a possibility" of hindering them. Forster himself is ill, and gone to the country; here in my prison I cannot even learn from anybody what the committee did last Saturday; but only that their next meeting is to be on Saturday week, when "testimonials are to be presented"—i.e., I suppose, and he presented them to the penultimate, if not even to the triumphant ultimate stage.



For myself all this is a thing evidently contrary to, not the London Library alone, and to its dear interests and rights, but to the Common Honesty of every one of us to whom said interests and rights have been tacitly but most validly delegated for management and supervision; and it is my decision, for one, that I must and will resist it, and try to find or make "a possibility": I think, it will be worse for me, if I don't. At all events, I will go before the thing end, and in some softest against such a proceeding, and refusing absolutely, I for one, to have any hand in it more or less, openly dismiss myself from the Committee, before they proceed to so untenable an operation. This alone, you perceive, will be but a poor measure; but better than this, on various sides, are open to us;—and in fact, I find, in my solitary contemplations here, that there are decided "possibilities" (pace Forster), and that if there were not, such must be made, and must be prosecuted with despatch and to the utmost!

The first of all, dear Helps, is that you, quite gently and with the habitual reticence, come up to Town, and lodge yourself within reach of me, the earlier the better, but at least a week before next Committee meeting. Unless actually held as I myself am, you are actually bound to this, somewhat as your good son would be if he saw one of your horses about to be given by a Cadogan, and could prevent it by a little running! My remaining capabilities of speech shall all be devoted to you; and before the day come, I hope to be myself on my feet again.

These things I have written, dear Helps, to "liberate my soul". I have no Candidate of my own; on the whole, no wish in the matter except that which would be done by the Committee; and especially by one poor member of it;—and, sure enough, Gladstone might saddle Kossuth or King Bomba on the Library, or put the Library altogether in his pipe, and smoke it to white ashes, without thereby ruining one's prospects in this immense universe! These things I know withal and will keep in mind; and yet I have written with complete persuasion what is above, and do very much wish and advise you to come, at once, if you can [MS National Library of Scotland]

The founder's blood was up, and he was prepared to denounce this Latin intruder, with cries of "Liberty, Liberty!"

blown incandescent by his indignation. Writing to Forster on the same day, he had suggested that taking Lacaita would be all too like charitably taking a cut of dubious salmon purveyed only because it was "extremely in need of being sold". The London Library deserved fresher produce. Cochrane's deputy, Jones, was thought of for the position, but hesitated to put himself forward, though others started doing so as soon as it was known Cochrane was dying, until no less than 250 applications were received, some swamping the diligent Jones's chances by their obvious merits. By May 26 Carlyle felt a little more confident about Lacaita, telling his brother that "the Gladstone Neapolitan, it is thought, is now far over the horizon—no fear of him at any rate" [MS National Library of Scotland]

The actual election on June 14 was described as a tough business, twenty-two of the committee under the Earl of Devon ("an accomplished old stanger") voting on a short list of eleven: William Bodham Donne, Fitzgerald's friend, got eighteen, and there were but four for "Lacaita (the Signor of merit)". Carlyle, "thrown into fury by the bother I had had (speaking too, too without the aid of parliamentary eloquence)", lost the triumphal note he had hurriedly penned for his brother John.

Donne held office until 1857, when he was appointed Examiner of Plays to the Lord Chamberlain. Carlyle was this time anxious to avoid any involvement in the appointment, and wrote to J. G. Marshall on April 20 that:

I hear there are now some Fifty-two Candidates for that Office in the London Library,—not one of whom, as I judge from former experience in such affairs, probably possesses the least real knowledge of "Bibliography", which is its essential business there. At any rate, anticipating such result, and being otherwise immeasurably busy in my own garret, I have undertaken not to interfere at all in the "Election", and shall most likely not be in the Committee at all the unhelpful operation is quite over. This has been already my answer to five special applicants. Your friend will produce his evidences like the others; if he is in fact a "Bibliographer" at all, I should think it would give him a shining distinction; and otherwise, I believe the Committee are sincerely desirous to get what they think the fittest man, and will endeavour to do strict justice. [MS London Library]

Carlyle became President of the London Library on the death of the Earl of Clarendon in 1870. By then seventy-five years old, he made it clear from the beginning that he would not undertake any executive role, as he reminded his old collaborator Christie, who had tried to involve him in a protracted discussion about staff salaries. Carlyle wrote on June 18, 1873 that "My 'Presidentialship' of the London Library was from the first, by express stipulation, and must continue so long as I am in it; altogether Nominal or Titular only, no duty attached to it whatever". Christie was advised not to send a letter on the matter under discussion, lest it should tamper a more thorough inquiry, which might ascertain "clearly to the bottom, what the actual, essential and practical (not *ideal*) condition of the London Library is, as it thus judging whether the pudding has been excellently baked, or not excellently".

Few though his later utterances were on the subject of the institution, he had done so much to inspire, and distant from its mundane administration though he liked to feel himself, almost forty years' experience must have given Carlyle a considerable degree of satisfaction at the success of the institution in St James's Square of which he was the real founder.

Thanks are due to the Librarian and Committee of the London Library, and to the British Library Board and the Trustees of the National Library of Scotland, for permission to examine and quote from manuscripts in their possession.

Professional portraits

By Valerie Adams

TRAUGOTT LAWLER:

The One and the Many in the Canterbury Tales
209pp. Hamden, Connecticut: Archon Books. \$7.50.
0 208 01842 5

It is a tantalizing property of the *Canterbury Tales* that overall interpretations of the work can usually be sustained only at the expense of justice to the parts. Traugott Lawler's book does not escape this difficulty, but it does offer a stimulating view of the *Tales* as a whole. The argument is based on two groups of related notions: munny, diversity, experience, private, particular, individual, set against one, unity, authority, public, general, professional. Lawler concludes that Chaucer finally places a higher value on the second group.

"Professional" is an important member of it, and the fabliau is an important genre, for Lawler the most prominent in the *Tales*. The Chaucerian fabliau typically consists of one or more professional portraits, followed by actions arising from details in the portraits. The *Tales* themselves, moreover, can be seen as a kind of meta-fabliau: the generalized portraits of the General Prologue are the preliminaries to the particular professional clashes in the links, and in some tales and groups of tales. To the extent that these clashes are seen as inevitable, given the nature and composition of the Prologue portraits, the *Tales* have an "authoritative" pattern.

Three characteristic features of the fabliau—the exposure of professional dishonesty, the explanation or confession of "tricks of the trade", and the climactic scene—are shared by three key tales, the *Pardoner's Tale*, the *Canon's Yeoman's Tale* and the *Wife of Bath's Prologue*. The *Pardoner's* professional performance, individual in its brilliance, foreshadows a rebuff from the Host; consequently the Pardoner must perform a genuine, private act of pardoning, which effectively reintegrates him with the company of pilgrims.

The alchemist-yeoman is another "experience" who exposes his trade. He follows up his account of a laboratory explosion with the conclusion that all such experiments must fail. Lawler makes some nice points on the conflict in his *Tale*. The Yeoman's ambivalent attitude to the alchemist's hope and disappointment afforded by the "bitter-sweet" pursuit of alchemy is compared with the first Canon's pathetic, single-minded devotion to research, to his craft, which unlike the more re-

spectable skills of the General Prologue, must be practised alone, secretly, and is obviously associated with deception. The word itself is used twice, and the Yeoman, having himself become an "authority", while the Canon rides off to further private frustrations. Experience does not always capitulate to authority.

The Wife of Bath is a third exemplar of experience: she exposes the professional tricks of without the climax is the teasing of her husband's book, but the Wife escapes as the winner, and she cannot, as Lawler admits, be made to fit the fabliau-like pattern in the way that the Pardoner and the Canon's Yeoman.

Lawler's interest in the theme of professional clashes leads him to pose a total opposition between the Yeoman and the Parson (the ultimate authority of the *Tales*), but this is debatable, for one of the "loving children" condemned by the Parson, but otherwise her failings are those of many of the pilgrims. Her views on marriage, Lawler fails to note, are essentially the Parson's: marriage is for procreation, and for payment of the "marriage-debt". She knows, too, that love is (though her unparsonical comment on this established fact is "ah!"). Her passion is directed at the professed anti-feminists who are supposed to assume the worst—a difficult task, as she suspects of adultery while confirming them. The technique of four husbands, and has beguiled many readers. The Wife's "experience" is not to be seen as separate from the "authorities" she attacks, and the complexities of the Prologue are not easily filled into the Lawler's scheme.

Lawler sees the Parson's Tale as a general treatment of the virtues and vices previously demonstrated in particular narrative contexts. The "tale" is certainly problematic: the obvious difficulty attendant on the interpretation of it as final and authoritative is that questions raised by other tales appear to be deprived of their force. The problem of the relationship between art and experience in the *Tales*, for example, cannot be easily dismissed. The Parson, Lawler maintains authoritatively "outlets" the Pardoner and other unparsonable practitioners, continuing the pattern of professional rivalry, by being honest, replacing literary with moral truths, and asserting implicitly that his general mode of discourse is the more effective one. But the reader's experience suggests otherwise.

Lawler is not dogmatic about his thesis. He admirably supports his view that Chaucer is "a poet of relationships", and there are many local observations.

Sexual speculations

By John Batchelor

MARK SPILKA:

Virginia Woolf's Quarrel with Gielgud
142pp. University of Nebraska Press. \$9.
0 8032 4120 8

When her mother had just died, the child Virginia Woolf told her half-sister Stella Duckworth that she had seen a man sitting beside the corpse. The adult Virginia Woolf in 1939, recalling her mother's death in 1895, commented: "Did I say that in order to attract attention to myself? Or was it true?"

Mark Spilka discounts the possibility that this was just a bit of childish showing-off, and firmly declares that Virginia Woolf saw the ghost of her mother's first husband, Herbert Duckworth. He believes that her mother's "feminine" description of the family for his (and his brother's) "recurrent" laughter, and was the cause of the boy's fantasizing. He passionately loves which he per undemocratic mother, withheld from Leslie Stephen, and which she observed in Virginia's fantasy for her

patient ghostly lover, became the model for the passion Virginia Woolf withheld from all living men. It was also the cause of the emotional elusiveness that Mark Spilka detects in Virginia Woolf's elegies: her "inability to love" became "a fantasy intertwined with her lifelong fantasy to grieve".

Spilka's vulgar and intrusive psychological speculations are followed by "criticism" which is really just wrong-headed but plausible wishfulness. For any normal reader, *Mr. Duckworth* is a plain tale. Case finds Peter immature and boring, but this critic, though Peter tires of his "sexual and spiritual darkness" and his "pocket-knife stands for his masturbation fantasies", "to the *Left Room*, Mrs. Duckworth's "house" and *The Waves* Spilka attempts to find an explanation for the novel's atonal treatment of death, which has something to do with the (World War) the disappearance of Edward Woolf, a major novelist sought by Virginia Woolf's private experience. No answer must be sought in the obvious debate as to whether the novel's bond in fantasy was stronger or weaker than the actual or fantasized rivalries which supposedly surrounded

POETRY

Vestal verses

By Edna Longley

ALICE BARNSTONE and WILLIS BARNSTONE:
A Book of Women Poets
From Adultery to Now
612pp. Schocken Books. £13.95.
0 852 3693 7

MARGARET HOMANS:
Women Writers and Poetic Identity
Dorothy Wordsworth, Emily Brontë, and Emily Dickinson
200pp. Gulliford: Princeton University Press. £8.30.
0 691 06440 7

Have women been culturally warned of poetry? Consider the testimony of Anne Bradstreet, no shrill feminist:

I am obnoxious to each carping tongue
Who says my hand a needle better fits,
A poet's pen all scorn I should thus
Forsook despite they cast on female wits:
If what I do prove well, it won't advance,
They'll say it's stol'n, or else it was by chance.

The Greek poet Praxilla was snubbed by Zenobio for trivial subject-matter: "Only a simpleton would put cucumbers and the like on a par with the sun and the moon".

On the evidence of *A Book of Women Poets*, women have indeed emphasized particular and private experiences, love and religion. So, of course, have many men; but the island "where burning Sappho loved and sang" lives today as the seductive model of an alternative poetic culture. Thanks and Bradstreet (not "Miss") does a blunt surname really make the status of female writers? It is in the anthology with a certain amount of reluctance from vast acres of time and space. Impressive enough, until you realize the impossibility of a masculine counterpart—Virgil, Dante, Chaucer, Shakespeare, Yeats. The range of the anthology, while usefully contradicting the notion that woman poets have a common identity, denies a coherent impact. And even if the *Anonymous* woman? "remains rhetorical, it's certain that 'Translator' is the author."

As for the English language goes, the selection does not bear out the editorial claim that poetry is "an art at

which women have always excelled". Considering its few practical needs—hardly even the novelist's "room of one's own"—and the fact that women, if educationally underprivileged, often avoid the financial insecurity of male genres, why did "Shakespeare's sisters" not flock to the sonnet when the stage-door was barred? If John Clare could rise above his circumstances, Patrick Kavanagh flower from the "stony grey soil of Monaghan", why not similar female feats? Kavanagh himself says, "I scarcely believe in the theory of the mute inglorious Milton. There might well be mute Bownes or Priestleys or Blundens, but hardly a Milton, a Shakespeare, an Auden."

Of course the very nature of the sonnet convention, as it inaugurated the English lyric, may have related barriers. Leaving aside the issue of social conditioning—and twentieth-century Russia towers in the more fundamental question which Margaret Homans sets out to answer in her critical study *Women Writers and Poetic Identity*: "How does the consciousness of being a woman affect the workings of the poetic imagination?" Poetic talent tends to declare itself amidst the whole turmoil of adolescent self-assertion. It erupts with pimples. Do girls turn aside to deal with the pimples? Or, as Homans sees it, feel themselves sexually disqualified from repeating "the eternal act of erection in the infinite I AM?" Some of the best women poets, like Dickinson and

Plath, were certainly driven to extremes in order to affirm their centrality: to articulate the lyric "I". Just as Stella never made *Asphodel* into a love-and-poetry object, so Homans, in her study of three nineteenth-century women, connects Dorothy Wordsworth's "evasions of poetic identity" with an inability to detach herself from "Mother Nature" ("a cultural fiction"), and celebrate her as "other". Being Lucy, how could she love her?

To be told by her own brother that she is like nature, and implicitly or explicitly that she cannot have her own subjectivity, would seem to be the most compelling of reasons for a woman to feel dislocated from the poetic tradition in which these opinions originate.

Emily Brontë gets further, by conceiving "a masculine muse", but "just as her attitude towards the visionary visitants is a mixture of desire and resistance... she treats nature's voice and powers with a mixed spirit of welcome and competition". Her poems can only resolve this ambivalence by aborting the lyric self within an unsatisfactory vision of "transcendence after death". Emily Dickinson, by properly understanding "language's fletiveness", by ironically exploiting both verbal and visionary ambivalence, dramatizes a personal dullness which replaces "the dualism of self and other that empowers the masculine tradition". She thus "undoes" male hierarchies and liberates daughter poets, from Mother Nature. Ultimately, "she

proposes a revision in the entire structure of patriarchal religion, to the effect that the incarnation might be come more like her poetry, instead of poetry aspiring to resemble the incarnation."

Homans has put her finger on a central issue, and also on an effective line of argument against Sapphic segregation, or against "the prevailing feminist opinion... that poetry must report on the poet's experience as a woman and that it must be true". In insisting "I am Adrienne alone", Adrienne Rich does indeed discard the richly flexible musk worn by Sylvia Plath as well as by Yeats. However, the analysis in *Women Writers and Poetic Identity* is excessively abstract, thematic and psychological. The case of Dorothy Wordsworth, in particular, exposes the thinness of Homans's theorizing. Might-have-beens might have been for so many different reasons. Manque-business is a dubious industry. Perhaps Dorothy knew her own limitations when she confined her ambition to "Descriptions, Sentiments, or little stories for children". To Homans, "the stately rock/With velvet moss o'ergrown" in "A Winter's Ramble" is a Freudian stumbling-block that renders the poem "a story in its own right", an "epitaphic" poem, a "self-sufficiency". But Dorothy may simply have lacked the inventiveness to proceed beyond a conventional statement of joy. (Similarly, when Emily Brontë complains that "truth has banished fancy's power", she resorts to a cliché that reveals the actual power working

in the poem to be low.) Dorothy's "selflessness" and sisterly fieldwork undeniably constitute a classic instance of role-differentiation, who compared with "Wordsworthian egotism". But Homans has never kept a diary if she finds the absence of the first-person from the following an "odd omission": "Walked on the hill-tops—a warm day. Sate under the firs in the park." And "I" is by no means "rare" in the *Journals*. Homans vacuum-seals the imagination in a psychic zone, removed from life on the one hand and language on the other. She observes that "literary experience is the poet's equivalent to the novelist's social experience", just as if her three poets had read exactly as she does, and did nothing else. Homans's unsensuous response to words—no theory can be founded on had writing—drains the excitement from even Emily Dickinson, and the sterile verbs "valorize", "internalize", "literalize" and "decontextualize" drip from her own pen. On Dorothy writing pensively about "the little happy sporting lambs", we are told: "Derrida's term 'phallogocentrism' is useful here." Homans's thesis (that the passage shows Dorothy to be radically upset by the content of the Dejection Ode dispirits a context which is open to a variety of interpretations).

A Book of Women Poets begins with the Sunnierin preface Enheduanna (c. 2300 BC) and ends with too many of the new American vestals. Soon enough, when hard evidence replaces speculation, we will know if more means better.

In the margin

By Peter Lewis

CERI RICHARDS:
Drawing to Poems by Dylan Thomas
96pp. Enitharmion Press. £5.75.
(Paperback £3.)
0 905289 47 1

DANNIE ABSE:
Miscellany One
108pp. Bridgport: Poetry Wales Press. £2.50.
0 907476 00 7

One thing you are not supposed to do to new books, especially first editions of major poets, is to doodle and draw on them. Yet this is precisely what the Welsh artist Ceri Richards did in 1953 to no fewer than four copies of the recently published first

most famous work, such as the various versions of "The force that through the green fuse drives the flower", was inspired by Thomas's poetry. Though Richards came from near Swansea and was eleven years older than Thomas, he does not seem to have discovered the poet's work until the end of the Second World War and did not meet the poet himself until shortly before Thomas's death in 1953. At that meeting they planned a collaborative exhibition plus-reading to be held in Swansea after what proved to be Thomas's first visit to the United States. It was probably while thinking about this collaboration that Richards adorned his copies of the *Collected Poems*, partly as a response and tribute to the fellow artist, but also to explore possibilities for larger-scale works.

What the Enitharmion Press has now done is to reproduce all the drawings Richards made (on November 7-8, 1953, the two days before Thomas's death) in his most fully decorated copy of the *Collected Poems*, together with the complete texts of the thirty poems he illustrated—exactly one third of the poems in the Debut edition of 1952. Some of the drawings are no more than high-class doodles, but others such as the powerful one for "I dreamed a dream" are complex and thoroughly worked. Richards often filled the spaces underneath poems, but in some cases where very little white page was left to him he still managed to produce fairly intricate drawings by employing all four margins to the full. Richards could also be playful and witty, as when he incorporates a page number in the navel of a nude. This fascinating publication has an informative though occasionally tendentious introduction by Richards.

The quarterly *Poetry Wales* has been a major outlet in Wales since it was launched in the mid-1960s, playing a vital part in what some have called the "second flowering" of Anglo-Welsh poetry. The new editor, Cary Arbuthnot, has now extended the magazine's activities by embarking on a book publication—decidedly courageous move, given the current economic climate. The first three titles from the Poetry Wales Press, all paperback, indicate that the imprint will concentrate on two types of books: slim collections of poetry, mainly by the rising generation of poets; and volumes of miscellaneous (mostly uncollected) work by older and established figures.

To judge from *Miscellany One*, devoted to Dannie Abse (*Miscellany*

Richards's artistic indebtedness to Thomas is well-known: some of his

thing for an editor. To have an editor you can trust, who likes your work and encourages it, is one of the rare securities of a life of writing. In his introduction, May writes:

Most of the poems I take away, naturally enough, by poets whom I already know, or know of, and whom I admire. They in turn know that I am glad to see anything they write, and then send in regularly, although I will often turn a particular poem down if I don't especially like it.

One is tempted to say that Mr May's attitude is not good enough; that it seems to serve a taste for reputations made elsewhere. But there are individual poets in the collection whose presence lends to disprove what seems to be Derwent May's style of choosing. The excellent *Edward* (1950) was little known, and May has taken a chance on others too. On the whole, his taste is, as Margaret Drabble says in her Preface, for the lucid, the clear and the precise, for poems with "a respect for form and order". Added to his apparent policy of familiarity—"poets whom I already know, or know of"—May's taste seems neither brave nor exciting. There are those who will say that his principles are just what they would expect of a literary editor of a weekly paper. It is unfortunate that Mr May should practically go out of his way to court that criticism.

Two will feature Emyr Humphreys, the second venture has little hope of fulfilling its ambition to append to the "general reader". The book contains a piece of autobiography about Abse's medical training (which overlaps with his full-length autobiography), an abandoned diary about a visit to Princeton, an essay written as the preface to his play *The Dogs of Powlo* (not included), seven poems (four included in his *Collected Poems*), an autobiographical story, and one-act play. The general reader needs to be directed to Abse's poetry, and there isn't much of that here.

The other two titles from the Poetry Wales Press are first books by gifted young poets. Both Mike Jenkins (*The Common Land*) and Nigel Jenkins (*Song and Dances*) are already familiar names to poetry-readers in Wales. Both poets write about a very wide range of experience, neither concentrating overmuch on specifically Welsh subject-matter; in Mike Jenkins's work, for example, both Germany and Creta feature prominently. In this respect they are typical of the new generation of poets in Wales who are shaking off the ideological influence of R. S. Thomas. Yet if their social and political outlooks are not conservative, their techniques certainly are. Nigel Jenkins is a poet still in search of his own voice, and it is in his more formal, wheeled idiom that he is likely to find it. The younger Mike Jenkins, with his clipped phrasing and taut articulation, is more assured and polished. The work of both is worthy rather than exciting.

It is not long since John Davies ruffled the Welsh literary world with an outrageously debunking poem, "How to Write Anglo-Welsh Poetry", in which he challenged the accepted paties of the 1960s and 70s about an Anglo-Welsh Literature. Sadly, the qualities that make this poem so memorable, its barbed aggressiveness and pithy wit, are absent from most of the other poems in his first book, *At the Edge of Town*. Decorated with small, coyly old-fashioned wood-engravings by Chris Bayley, the book has a quaint appearance, and much of Davies's poetry verges on the neo-Georgian—once again, it is called "For Andrew Young". Except on those rare occasions when he is antiridical or ironic, his handling of strict forms and rhyme often seems mechanical, producing stiffness and an air of indec academicism. When he breaks free, as in several poems at the end of the volume (notably "Small Towns"), he achieves much more.

J. H. C. 116

An early virtuoso

By Michael Hunter

JOHN BOWLE:
John Evelyn and his World
277pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul.
£12.50.
0 7100 0721 3

John Evelyn presents a difficult challenge to any prospective biographer, not least because there are three different facets to his life and writings, each revealed by a separate set of sources. First, there is Evelyn's role in his own day as an intellectual and a proponent of the culture of "virtu" fashionable in late seventeenth and early eighteenth century England. John Aubrey summed him up as "one of our first Virtuosi", and this was really his chief contemporary claim to fame, both as an author and as a kind of cultural consultant to the court and the aristocracy. It was also true that he was remembered for several decades after his death, as is shown by the editions that continued to appear into the eighteenth century of his works on architecture, engraving, silviculture and gardening.

Then there is the *Diary*, first published in 1818, on immediate success which stimulated the first publication of Pepys's diary a few years later. The *Diary* presented a rather different Evelyn to the public, since it makes only passing reference to his own writings. Instead we have here first a travel journal and then a day-to-day view of historical events and courtly

life in England from the 1650s to the early years of the eighteenth century by a pious, prudent and patriotic gentleman, bulked out by self-effacing remarks about himself and his family. The *Diary* is a self-portrait, a picture of an upright and public-spirited figure which was much to the taste of the literate circles of the nineteenth century. Related to it is another work discovered and greatly admired in the nineteenth century, Evelyn's *Life of Mrs Godolphin*, an idealized account of a young lady, Margaret Blagge, who married Sidney Godolphin and with whom Evelyn had a heightened friendship in the 1670s. The subject of this hagiography seemed to Victorian readers a paragon of pious femininity.

The problem with both the *Diary* and this *Life* is to know how accurate they are. This is not necessarily to imply that Evelyn actually lied about situations or episodes, but rather that he may have created a slightly artificial image by partial statements or complex motives. Reading between the lines of the *Diary*, Virginia Woolf intimated in an essay of 1920 that Evelyn was rather a bore and perhaps something of a hypocrite. Her scepticism was taken further—very much too far—by W. G. Hoskins in his *John Evelyn and Mrs Godolphin* (1951) and *John Evelyn and his Family Circle* (1955). Hoscock tried to collate the *Life* and the *Diary* with a third source of information about Evelyn, the profuse manuscript letters and papers preserved since his time by the Evelyn family. Hoscock claimed to find there evidence that Evelyn falsified the record about his

relations with Mrs Godolphin, with servants and with members of his family. Some of Hoscock's aspersions were unfair and completely unfounded. His account of Evelyn's highly-charged relationship with Margaret Blagge was vitiated by his presumption that all religious sentiments must hypocritically conceal more cynical motives, and in both books too much of his case was based on innuendo rather than proof. But John Evelyn and his *Family Circle* does valuably supplement about Evelyn's domestic and financial affairs and his transactions with his close relations that, for one reason or another, was not inserted in the *Diary*. The Evelyn papers, which have been on deposit at Christ Church, Oxford, for the past thirty years, undoubtedly provide data on Evelyn which supplements the writings he published himself and those brought out posthumously in the nineteenth century. No serious student of Evelyn would now feel able to ignore them.

John Bowle has not looked at more than a handful of these manuscripts: in his preface he disavows any attempt to make new discoveries, and *John Evelyn and his World* is intended to provide a rounded picture of Evelyn, evidently for the general reader. This is suggested not only by the book's predictable and not especially appropriate title but also by its asides, as for instance where Mr Bowle stops to reflect "how constant many French characteristics have long remained" or to note how "in his mid-sixties, Evelyn, like most elderly

English people in most centuries, was more than ever convinced that England was going to the dogs".

The dust-wrapper boasts that this is "the first biography of John Evelyn to be based not only on the *Diary* but also on a full account of his lesser-known writings", but this is misleading. Bowle's is not the first modern biography to combine information about Evelyn's works with details from the *Diary*: Arthur Ponsonby's book of 1933, for instance, did the same. Nor does it in any sense do justice to Evelyn's preoccupations and achievements as a writer. More than one work is dismissed with words like "save for specialists in 17th-century theology, it is not exciting", and even those details which are dispatched with rather patronizing summaries. Furthermore some of Evelyn's most interesting books are not even mentioned, particularly from the 1650s, the most intellectually productive period of his life.

Instead, most of the book comprises a narrative of Evelyn's life and times based on the *Diary*, which is profusely quoted and paraphrased throughout. Personally, I would rather read the *Diary* itself rather than this pedestrian summary with its snatches of background information, but Bowle doubtless understands better than I do the tastes of his likely readers. Hence the book very much reflects the Evelyn of the *Diary*, the proper, self-important minor statesman makes occasional critical asides, these are not sustained. In addition, however, and particularly towards the end

of the book, he also deploys his cock's findings on Evelyn's domestic affairs and his relations with his family, thereby revealing some of the strains and difficulties that Evelyn experienced. Indeed, more use is made of Hoscock's work than is acknowledged in the notes, which make it all the more disappointing that Bowle nowhere states where he stands on the aspersions that Hoscock cast on Evelyn.

Moreover, though in general Bowle swallows whole Evelyn's portrait of himself in the *Diary*, there are prominent themes there which he is as distasteful as Hoscock did, and he is Evelyn's religion. Bowle is loath to see this as a disagreeable blot on an otherwise benign personality, explaining Evelyn's "religious doubts" and his "puritanical and gloomy beliefs". In fact, he makes little or no attempt to understand Evelyn's deep religiosity: it reads like a secondary source that has more justice to this, they should be more penetrating volume. John Evelyn *Exquire: An Anglican Layman of the 17th Century*, published by the C. M. Press in 1968.

We have here, therefore, a rather superficial and unsatisfactory book which fails to mould together the different facets of Evelyn's life and activities and does not give a wholly convincing view even of the Evelyn of the *Diary*. It may encourage some general readers to find out more about its subject, but its author can hope for little more than that.

Yet there were many people and generations in these decades who were concerned about preserving Britain, and this book by John Sheail is important, and it does much to set the record straight. While it does not minimize the vandalism which destroyed so much, it describes the way in which opinion changed and legislation was gradually introduced to safeguard at least some of what was left. Measures which were proposed but broken out in 1939 are shown to have been responsible for much of the success in protecting the countryside to the post-war period.

There were of course planning regulations before 1914. Historic monuments had some protection, at

Unwelcome developments

By Kenneth Mellanby

JOHN SHEAIL:
Rural Conservation in Inter-War Britain
263pp. Clarendon Press: Oxford
University Press. £16.50.
0 19 825236 5

ROBERT BOARDMAN:
International Organisation and the Conservation of Nature
215pp. Macmillan. £15.
0 19 26265 4

Most conservationists in Britain today believe that during the inter-war years there were no effective planning controls regulating changes in the countryside. The belief is reinforced by driving along miles and miles of roads in all parts of the country and finding the view blocked by ribbon development mostly dating from the 1920s and 30s, by visiting enormous areas of characterless suburbs, and by seeing how much of our previously splendid coastline has been desecrated by speculators peddling bungalow excrecences, of which Peasehaven is perhaps the most notorious.

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There were of course planning regulations before 1914. Historic monuments had some protection, at

least in theory, and the Housing, Town Planning Act of 1909 set standards to improve new housing; but the effect of this legislation was also to cover larger and larger areas of prime countryside with buildings. In the years immediately after 1919, with demobilized soldiers returning to a "land fit for heroes", new homes were so badly needed that planning had to take second place. The worst horrors occurred mostly in the 1920s, and did much to awaken public opinion and persuade a reluctant parliament to pass the 1932 Town and Country Planning Act. This gave enlightened local authorities considerable powers, though these were by no means always effectively used.

It is impossible to summarize this long book to a short review. It will be invaluable to students of planning and conservation who wish to know what really happened during the inter-war years. The author has not been daunted by the magnitude of his task. He has studied all the available records, parliamentary papers, archives of all sorts, the private documents of the main protagonists. In most hands this could have been a worthy compilation, required reading for a few students, deadly dull for anyone else—but Mr Sheail has produced a surprisingly readable text. The subject matter is logically arranged in thirteen chapters. After a brief introduction, we have "The Urban Attack", showing how an increasing population and improved transport facilities meant that more people moved into the countryside. We then have a chapter on "Rural Dislocation", which demonstrates how depopulation and a depressed agriculture affected the situation. The remainder of the book deals chapter by chapter, with the ways in which different planning and management problems were dealt with during the period. Sheail's account of the way in which a comparatively small number of men led the fight, particularly interesting, John Dower and Patrick Abercrombie had ideas and vision, and Gwynn Gibbo and George Poplar, on the government side, helped to put

these ideas into practice. A full complement of lesser "goodies" and "baddies" are also named and their efforts identified. At a more Olympian level, Ramsay MacDonald and Neville Chamberlain obviously cared for the countryside, and were generally on the side of the angels, even though when in high office they had little time to continue the work they had done much to initiate.

In the inter-war period "conservation" meant mainly that of landscape and buildings. Wildlife was less often considered though it was not entirely forgotten. National Parks were to be created to provide facilities for it and Dower wanted "extensive areas to be set aside, as nature reserves". However, it was generally believed that if we protected the farmer and his land, then the flora and fauna would continue to flourish. This was largely true up until 1945, but experience of the latest farming revolution has shown that the situation is rapidly changing. Money now sees the farmer as the main enemy of both landscape and wildlife. There is thus an even greater need today for nature reserves, and this brings us to Robert Boardman's book, on nature conservation as an international problem.

Mr Boardman is a political scientist, best known for his studies of foreign policy, particularly in relation to communist China. He has used his expertise here to study the ways in which such bodies as the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources operate, with case studies from the Antarctic and the tropics. His book will be valuable to serious students, but others will find it heavy going. The difference between the two volumes considered here is that, though both are scholarly works, John Sheail is clearly an enthusiast for conservation, and commends his views to his readers, while Robert Boardman gives the impression that he is more concerned with the problems of organization, than with the welfare of living animals and plants.

Where we belong

By Kim Taplin

RONALD ALTYER (Editor):
Places
An Anthology of Britain
238pp. Oxford University Press. £7.95.
0 19 211575 8

"I am not a pure spirit, and he has put in the places in which he has lived and experienced joy or sadness. He is loved up with matter, with things, with the ground he lives on." So wrote Paul Tournier in *L'homme et son lieu*. Ronald Altyer's forty-three contributors, all established writers, explore the relationship by evoking places, from the whole of England to a small garden, which are significant to them. And it's a revealing revelation if we had all been asked to write on the three blank pages at the end of *Places* instead of filling in our forms; our contributors might have done something.

The essays and poems (except for one published piece by John Larkin, Philip Larkin and Jan Morris) were written for or first published in the book. The illustrations are watercolours by John Piper, which are so good that they and the text are almost inseparable. They are a slight tangential to the main theme of the book, but they are the best I have seen by Dick Jones, and his fields with yellow poplars and a bird-printed low do line black and white illustrations, a select bibliography.

Contributors have given their work free of charge, which for many has released a particularly personal communication. (For just a few, it has also meant a slight indulgence of vanity, especially in one or two poems from those accustomed to publishing prose: a pity, when some fine "poets of place" are underrepresented.) But mostly these are affidavits, even where the tone is easy or the details humorous—all the way from Barbara Pym's deceptively demure West Oxfordshire diary to the Pauline ring of Edward Storer's fierce attachment to the Fen country: "No thog can keep me from where I want to be and where I know I belong". And again and again there's a sense of release; Richard Mabey kicking off his shoes on the Norfolk shore, Nina Bayden at Horns Bay "with that curious lens that sometimes opens up in the mind, letting in light and memory", for Elizabeth Jennings tears at the poignancy of English summer, and very strikingly for R. S. Thomas, a poet who admits "no easy resolutions":

who has arrived
after long journeying where he
began, finding this
one truth by surprise
that there is everything to look
forward to.

Statements of love and gratitude are appropriate to the book's purpose, as its anthologist points out: thanksgiving for places we are able in some fashion to belong to is not an affront to the displaced, but a duty that helps us feel with their condition. Here are celebrations of North and South, town and country, coast and inland, buildings and landscapes, here are geology, history, natural history, people—the matter of Britain—is a real and legendary sense.

A man of the marshes

By Charles Ross

COLIN RICHMOND:
John Hopton
A Fifteenth Century Suffolk Gentleman
267pp. Cambridge University Press.
£17.50.
0 521 23434 4

Colin Richmond has chosen to write a rather unusual book about a person who may also have been rather unusual, but, if so, more for what he was than for who he was. To devote an entire book to a single Suffolk gentleman, who apart from his wealth, was not very prominent even in his own lifetime, may at first sight seem a venture of questionable value; the more so because Dr Richmond's hero was, by fifteenth-century standards, very much an anti-hero. John Hopton, esquire, who never bothered to become a knight, was apparently unmoved by any worldly ambition, except in some degree on behalf of his sons. Although twice sheriff of his county, he never sat in parliament either for Suffolk or for a Suffolk borough as might have been expected of a man of his position; and he shocked his proper share in the local government of his county ("work-shy"). Richmond labels him. He also evoked only involvement in the divisive politics, both local and national, of his age, which coincided with the Wars of the Roses (he died in 1478). Except in his early years, he was happily free of the spiritual and land-hungry litigation which tormented so many of his contemporaries. For almost fifty years he was seemingly content to live the life of an independent, if not bucolic landowner from his manor-house at Blythburgh, whose great church still towers over the south-east Suffolk marshes.

John Hopton thus stands far apart from what has come to be regarded as the archetype of "the gentleman whose aggressive self-confidence, imperious acquisitiveness and blatant family pride set the tone of English history between the fourteenth and eighteenth centuries". A judgement quoted by Richmond at the beginning of his book. He stands out in sharp contrast with the feuding nobility and gentry of nearby Norfolk, whose lives were full of restless violence and petty feuds, and contrast with the more

worldly and thrusting forebears; his grandfather, Sir Robert Swillington, (d. 1391), was chamberlain, councillor and retainer of the mighty John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, and a royal knight, who accumulated a very substantial landed estate, mainly in Yorkshire, where his exceptionally wealthy manor of Swillington produced more revenue than all the Suffolk estates put together. Richmond, on his own admission, has little to say about this Yorkshire connection; and more might have been said.

All this came to John Hopton in 1430 under a family settlement made eighty years earlier. John was peculiarly fortunate to inherit, partly because of the unexpected deaths of those above him in the settlement, and also because he came of a bastard line (via grandmother, Joan Hopton, was Sir Robert Swillington's mistress, not his wife).

and it was peculiarly rare for a bastard line to inherit on his scale. John Hopton may also be contrasted with his own ambitious eldest son, Sir William, who, reviving the Yorkshire connection, laid his future beside that of Richard III, became treasurer of the royal household, but then died cruelly in 1484 before his likely participation in Richard's overthrow at Bosworth Field might have wrecked the family's fortunes.

Was John Hopton therefore wholly untypical of his times and position? Richmond clearly thinks not, and repeatedly suggests that there may well have been as many Hoptons as there were Pastons abroad in later fifteenth-century England. Yet, disarmingly but disappointingly, he disclaims having made any systematic comparisons, and, in his book at least, John Hopton is *sui generis*. Yet the thesis is not

implausible, for it has always been a danger in studying fifteenth-century society that the very wealth of documentation for the fortunes or misfortunes of the Paston family has caused us to regard their experience as typical rather than exceptional. Nevertheless, it remains a pity that Richmond did not attempt to substantiate his hypothesis by further example.

There remains, moreover, something of a hollow centre to the book, for, despite all his efforts, Richmond has been able to add little flesh and blood to the elusive figure of his hero. He is too good a scholar not to admit, on several occasions, that "it is easier to say what John Hopton was not than what he was". Was he a mere fifteenth-century Squidro Weston? Or a prudent and upright man, as Richmond suggests? At best, the epitaph Richmond

devises for him—*Laudabiliter natus cano no more than an educated guess from a scholar deeply versed in the historical ecology of his times*.

The book remains an interesting piece of social history, for what Richmond is really doing is setting a stage, out of very prominent individuals in the context of his origins, his family and the grouping of his friends, neighbours and acquaintances, and he admirably analyzes. Too much attention is devoted to the rather pedestrian estate material, all for Suffolk. So, relentless pages of analysis, many in minor, are overlooked: only by the presence of the thousands of tedious rabbits who copy like, scampers in and out of accounts. Richmond writes in a style that is entertaining if sometimes quirky. What is deeply surprising, in a book of this kind, is the absence of any systematic bibliography.

Well received by critics when it was first published, in 1978 (C. V. Woodcock: "A fine, sympathetic study"), *Bloody Mary* has just been reissued in a paperback (533pp) J.M. Dent. At 0 460 12041 7. The author's account of Mary's life is presented in five parts: "The Princess", "The King's Troubled Daughter", "The Unhappy Love", "The King's Wife", "The Queen's Mother".

Professor Denton's book is an extremely learned contribution to the history of the tangled relations be-

tween Church and Crown. Moreover, in writing it, he has produced a perceptive biography of Winchester. Both Winchester and Edward I were bold, single-minded men, and each of them was concerned to uphold justice as he saw it. The issue was complicated by the fact that after 1295 Edward was regarded by a large section of his barons as an oppressive king, who wanted to increase taxation without paying the price in agreeing to respect the limitations imposed upon royal power by Magna Carta, while Winchester, although respected as a scholar and a saintly man, was distrusted by a large part of the king's government, and increasingly ill-supported by a series of popes of whom the last, Clement V, was one of the king's staunchest supporters. Yet in fact no great expedition occurred. Edward, I did eventually confirm the charters, and his weaker successor, who seems to have had little regard for the sanctity of an oath, at least promised to accept the reforms proposed by the Lords Ordainers, of whom Winchester was one. The archbishop himself suffered a period of suspension and exile, but he did at least do in office and in his bed.

Professor Denton's book is an extremely learned contribution to the history of the tangled relations be-

The watch-dog of Canterbury

By Rosalind Hill

JEFFREY H. DENTON:
Robert Winchelsey and the Crown
1294-1313
A study in the defence of ecclesiastical liberty
341pp. Cambridge University Press.
£17.50.
0 521 22963 4

"They said 'Lord, behold, here are two swords.' And he said unto them: 'It is enough.' Medieval canonists, steeped in the tradition of the Bible, interpreted the words of the Bible as a common-sense explanation of the pope's weapons taken by the disciples into the Garden of Gethsemane. To them from the time of Pope Gelasius onwards, the two swords represented the two kinds of authority valid in the Christian world, the power of the church to order men's spiritual lives, and the power of the king to control their temporal affairs. Both were accepted as proper and rightful, and there should be no real contradiction between them. As Sir Maurice Powicke wrote: 'The real enemies were the priests and heretics who would not accept the authority of the king.'

Yet in practice the border-line was notoriously difficult to define. Christianly permitted every aspect of a man's life, but to also did regard for the law of the land. Marriage, in itself one of the seven sacraments, was apt to give rise to complicated lawsuits in the king's courts about inheritance or a widow's claim to her rights of dower. Taxation was essential to the maintenance of the king's government and the defence of his realm, in default of which many of the Christian virtues would hardly be in a position to flourish, but should the clergy pay taxes; and if so, were these to be levied solely upon their temporalities, or should they include also spiritualities? Bishop and king were engaged in a common enterprise, the defence of society against the evils of unbelief and barbarism, yet the very nature of their authority made it inevitable that they would be drawn into conflict. At no time were these quarrels more bitter, more complicated or more thoroughly recorded than at the end of the thirteenth century. The fact that they produced no spectacular results such as the murder of Becket was a tribute to the essential moderation of everyone concerned.

Jeffrey H. Denton has studied with great learning the history of one such conflict that between

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